

**1 + 1 = SUCCESS:**

**The Dynamics of Effective Partnerships**

**Debra Ann Jordan**

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## INTRODUCTION

*"And the LORD God said,  
It is not good that the man should be alone;  
I will make him an help meet for him." (Genesis 2:18)*

Batman and Robin, husband and wife, teacher and student, mentor and mentee, manager and assistant - what do these individuals all have in common? Relationship, partnership, covenant, commitment, agreement. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were never married, yet they had a great relationship/partnership, one where there was synergy, energy and synchronicity.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #1**

#### **No man is an island.**

No man is an island. God never intended for Man to be alone. God never intended for Man to live in isolation. God never intended for Man to walk by himself/herself. The original plan of God was built on the foundation of partnership. Even God himself did not work in isolation. God worked in partnership when he began His creation work. *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth"* (Genesis 1:26). God's divine law for creation encompassed the very essence of partnership, team, unity and community.

In the natural world, one plus one equals two. One orange plus one orange, equals two oranges. One child plus one child, equals two children. One dog plus one dog, equals two dogs. But in the spiritual realm, 1 plus 1 = Success! Partnerships, relationships, community, unity are all vital to our survival and existence. No Man is an island unto himself. Therefore, it is

important that we make the right connections, kingdom connections, Godly connections that are on the path to our destiny. Destiny is all about making the right choices. It is your choice.

We see partnerships throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation - Joshua and Caleb, Moses and Aaron, Moses and Miriam, Elijah and Elisha, Elijah and Gehazi, and so many more. Even Jesus, the Son of God, one who knew He had all power within Him, the epitome of God manifested in flesh knew He could not fulfill His purpose on earth by Himself. On His ministry journey, Jesus chose the 70, He chose the 12, then He chose the 3, and then the 1. If you are a part of humanity, you have not been called to walk by yourself. You have been called to partner with people. Christians are movers and shakers in the earth and therefore, we can create dynamic, amazing partnerships in the world to promote the gospel, build strong businesses and entrepreneurial ventures, build strong marriages and families, educate our children and foster camaraderie, peace and wholeness in the world.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #2**

**If you don't understand the purpose of a thing, abuse is inevitable.**

Oftentimes, men and women enter into different partnerships or relationships with different individuals and abuse is the result. The reason... they did not understand the purpose of the partnership. If you don't understand the purpose of a thing, abuse is inevitable. Once you understand the purpose and importance of partnership, then you will not abuse it. When you understand the purpose of particular relationships and partnerships, you will make sure that the purpose is fulfilled according to the plan that God designed. This book will bring a greater understanding of the importance of partnerships and relationships not only in the Christian community, but the business community, as well. Overall success is built upon teamwork and partnerships. If you want to be successful, you cannot do it alone. It takes teamwork, collaboration, strong relationships and partnerships.

# CHAPTER 1

## NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

*Love is our true destiny.  
We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone -  
we find it with another. ~Thomas Merton*

### **Destiny Bound**

At its most fundamental state, destiny is about choosing and making right choices. It is important to make right connections, because the right connections are directly related to your divine destiny. Earth is a place of connections and family. God said, "*It is not good for man to be alone*" (Genesis 2:18). God himself, the Creator, looked at Man and saw that Man was not created to be by himself. Man thrives within the context of partnership.

Partnerships can come in many different forms, sizes and shapes. There are partnerships in business, marriage, family, ministry, the arts and so much more. We were born to connect. Partnerships are formed even in your giving. "*Give and it shall be given unto, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over shall men give into your bosom*" (Luke 6:38, emphasis added). When God created the earth, He gave us everything we needed to be successful, including each other. Now, it is up to us to further that connection and to multiply that which God gave to us. The only way we can do that is through connections, relationships and partnerships.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #3**

**I need you to survive.**

A woman or a man cannot conceive a baby alone. There must be a connection. We were born to connect to a greater, better and brighter future. We were born to connect with others in order to fulfill our own destiny. Hezekiah Walker wrote a song that said, *"I need you, you need me, we are a part of God's body.... I need you to survive."* When we come together as a family, we create possibility and manifest the greater good in the earth that the Father intended.

You are not supposed to move around in the earth alone, by yourself, solo. To be by yourself is a sin. Why is it a sin? Because you are not following the first commandment of God. God said in the beginning, *"It is not good for Man to be alone."* When Man is left alone, he has no balance and no boundaries. That is why we are to connect. We are to come together and share in each other's lives and in each other's stories. The Bible says in Hebrews 10:25, *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* You cannot even have church by yourself. We need that connection. We need to come together. We need to assemble ourselves with others of like mind and spirit.

Jesus was the Son of God and He had all power, but even Jesus could not fulfill His purpose by Himself. Jesus chose His 12 disciples. Not only that, He chose the individual that was going to betray Him. He said, *"Have I not chosen these 12, and one of you are a devil"* (John 6:70). When you begin to make right choices and choose with whom you are going to connect, that is the epitome of demonstrating your divinity, your divine self in action. When you are alone, you are at risk of moving into an area that I like to call "selfishness," because you are by yourself. Pattie Labelle wrote a song entitled "All Alone," and part of the lyrics say, *"All alone, by myself, why did you have to leave me."* It is a love song, but we can hear the sadness of being alone. What she thought she had, she later realized she did not have anymore. In her mind, it was not supposed to be that way.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #4**

**It is not God's will for us to be alone.**

It is not God's will for us to be alone. We are to find our right connections. Sometimes finding those connections can be somewhat challenging. But just because it is a challenge, it does not mean that you should give up or throw in the towel. It is for you to keep on keeping on, because it is the will of God for you to have working relationships in your life. Iron sharpens iron. From Genesis to Revelation we see the importance of connections.

Genesis 2 says, *"And God said, therefore shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife."* In that powerful verse of scripture, we see a connection was established. Family was identified. He is with mother and father. But once he leaves that partnership, he turns and begins to create another connection. You do not see that space where he is alone or he is walking by himself trying to find someone. But he leaves one partnership of mother-father-son to connect to another partnership of husband-wife. It is not God's will for us to be alone. It is not God's will for us to sit in isolation and say, "God called me this way."

Some people may say, "I haven't been called to marriage." That is good, but God has called you to someone or someplace, because it is not God's will for you to be alone. When the enemy comes to attack, it is always easier for the enemy to attack someone that is outside of the camp of the Lord. The sheep that always gets attacked by the wolves are the sheep that are on the outside. As long as the sheep stay with the sheepfold, they are safe. There is comfort. There is power in group connection.

Jesus was God manifested in flesh, but even on earth He chose His partners. What He shared with the one, He didn't share with the whole group. There were different levels. How much you want from God or how deep you want to go into the things of God will determine the level of your connection or relationship. Sometimes we connect with people and they want to be with us forever. But Ecclesiastes 3:1, says, *"To everything there is a time and a season."* Relationships are for seasons, because there is always a reason behind that season.



## **And God Made Man**

Taking a trip back to the beginning, into the mind of God, according to Scripture, God made a deliberate decision to create a being that looked just like Him. Prior to making Man, God used His expertise in the creation of other things. He designed the sky, separated it from the ground, gathered the waters in different places and left enough space for dry land. He made the animals, every creeping thing that you can think of, the birds of the air and the array of fishes that dwell in the sea. He made all these things and he had no issue with them. He looked at it all and said to himself, *"This is good."*

Then God had an even bigger idea. He looked around in all of creation and realized that nothing reflected His being, His nature, His ability to think, His will, His power, His beauty and elegance. So, He decided to make Man in His image and in His likeness. God did an amazing molding work. He took clay and shaped it into something that looked like Himself. He took a step back, looked at it and saw that it was lifeless, breathed life into the clay and that "something" became a living being that could see, hear, move, talk, feel, smell and think. He called this living being Man and gave him the privilege to name the other animals. Man's ability to name the animals and the names that he gave them became the names thereof, showed how perfect God created Man.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #5**

#### **Man was not like any other creature God created.**

Man was not like any other creature God created. There were many creatures, some that lived in the sea, some that could fly, many that crawled upon the face of the earth, many that could stand as well, but none of them was like Man. What separated Man from the other animals? Although they have distinct looks, there are still other distinct characteristics that distinguish Man from the other animals in the animal kingdom. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, which is a major quality that separates him from any other kind of animal.

The birds were made in a unique image, crawling creatures were made in a unique image, even the lion, the king of the jungle, had its own distinct image. But Man was in a category by himself. He was created in the express image of the Father and given the divine characteristics and attributes of God. The behavior of Man is far more complex than that of any other living creature on planet earth. God's image is revealed through Man in many ways that distinguish him for other creatures.

- Man has a creative mind and imagination that allows him to take a thought from the idea state and bring it into the existence in the natural world. He has the ability to have innovative thoughts to even create things that have never been seen before. Man also has the creative ability and skill to turn an idea into an artistic masterpiece through music, dance, drama and fine art.
- Man has feelings and is able to express different emotions based on different circumstances. He is able to express love, care, kindness and compassion, hate, disappointment and trust. He is able to enter into relationships and mutual partnerships with others.
- Man is blessed with the privilege of choice. We all have different purposes given to us by God. Man can live his life, act, react and pattern his behavior based on this purpose. He is also able to search for the meaning of life for himself, be a part of various cultures, create cultures and alter them at any point in time.
- Man is different from every other creation in that he can have a relationship with God. He can commune with God, honor and worship Him. Man was primarily created to worship and serve God and then to serve people, which ultimately forms the basis of our society. We serve others through our businesses, careers, relationships and churches. We were created to serve others who are in need. Jesus said, *"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."* (Matthew 25:40)

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #6**

## **Man is the most treasured creation of God.**

Man is the most treasured creation of God. We are so important to God that even after creation and the fall of Man, God still returned to reconcile us back to Himself. It is this value that is placed on man by God that profoundly distinguishes him from all other creation. Man has the power to decide his fate, unlike most other animals who are at the mercy of Man.

God created man to be fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue and have dominion in the earth. His creation plan was perfect and executed perfectly from start to finish. But after He created Man, what did he do? He saw that Man was alone, even though there were thousands of living creatures for whom Man could have spent time tending. Man and animals were not compatible. Man needed another being like himself with whom to relate and interact. Like minds connect. God knew that Man could not relate to animals like he could relate to another being like himself. In order to fulfill the purpose of God, which was to be fruitful and multiply, replenish, subdue and have dominion over the earth, Man needed to interact, partner and commune with someone like himself. God had a greater purpose for man.

### **It Is Not Good for Man to Be Alone**

*"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" (Genesis 2:18)*

God said, *"It is not good for man to be alone."* In this passage of scripture, I do not want to look at Man as being male or female, but humankind as a whole. God saw that Man was alone and was aware that being alone was not good for him. It wasn't good for Adam then, and it still isn't good for us now. Being alone has certain psychological effects that are oftentimes not very positive. When a person is not in relationship with others and does not interact in community, he/she tends to become independent to a fault, feeling that they can do everything on their own.

However, God's original intent was for Man to be fruitful and multiply, which implies that Man was never created to do everything by himself.

Those who choose to be alone tend to miss out on a lot of things in life. Being alone here does mean choosing from time to time to isolate from friends and family, work or school and treat yourself to some personal reflection time. It means being isolated mentally and physically from community, having no friends, refusing to interact with family, refusing to marry, having no children, being absolutely alone.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #7**

#### **Isolation is sickness.**

I'm sure if you take some time to reminisce on past events in your own life and some things that might have happened to you that caused you to be alone, like moving to a new school, for example, and not having anyone to talk to or going back to your room without a roommate, you could relate to the feeling of being alone. No one to talk to on the phone, no one to interact with by text or through social media, no one to confide in, share ideas, aspirations, desires, and common goals with can be very detrimental to one's mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. Although some people generally enjoy being alone, there is nothing wrong with enjoying occasional conversations, parties, social gatherings, hobbies and community involvement. Isolation is sickness. We all need fun things to do and healthy human interaction from time to time in our lives, regardless of our age.

Let's take a closer look at marriage as an example. We are called to marry at a certain point in our lives, because it was never God's intent for Man to be alone. Once we get to an age where it is culturally acceptable to get married and we have reached a point in our lives where we can say we are ready, then being alone becomes an issue. Let's go back again to the very beginning of the human race so that you can further understand my point on this subject. As recorded in Genesis 1 and 2, God, who is eternal and timeless, decided to create Adam, the first

human being, and place value on him greater than every other animal. He then realized that aloneness was not good for Man (Genesis 2:18), which is the first time he noticed something wasn't good in the whole of Eden. He saw everything else that He made as good, but He said, *"It is not good for man to be alone."* We were created to connect, interact and partner with other people.

Let's take a moment and look at a case study. John is a 20-year-old college student. He is an introvert and spends most of his time alone. In college, he did not have many friends. He would speak when spoken to, but when people tried to talk to him or become friends with him he often pushed them away. This went on for his four years in school and ultimately, after graduation, he started a firm that specialized in developing ideas, which required collaboration and input from other great minds. He needed people from specific fields to partner with him, but he didn't know many people in that field. The only ones he knew were his roommates from college. But he couldn't reach them now. He never got their contact information, nor was he in relationship with anyone else who had their email addresses or telephone numbers. As a result, he had to start scouting around for people, and even though he was not completely satisfied with the ones that applied for the positions, he had to bring them on board because of his urgent need.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #8**

#### **No man is an island.**

Oftentimes, people go through life engaging in various groups, but without really connecting and forming strategic, cohesive, trusting relationships. Many play the solo game and refuse to engage in activities with other people or even just one-on-one moments with people they admire. However, connection is important. It is vital to one's survival in business, career, family and life in general. Becoming friends with someone could develop into long-lasting relationships that may lead to successful business partnerships, close friendships or may even lead to marriage and family.

No man is an island. We have not been called to do the work of God, create a business, or be in a relationship alone. It is to our advantage to research the matter and find out with whom we have been called to connect. We are called to connect with other people. God did not create Man to be by himself. A connection of some sort is very necessary. We cannot just exist in the world without connecting with people around us. You will most likely encounter depression when you isolate yourself and remain alone, and then see or hear about other people who are spending time together creating memories, in business together and being successful together. You miss out on a long list of benefits when you fail to connect with people.

## **Compatibility Issues**

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #9**

#### **Compatibility is workability, synergy, camaraderie.**

When God created the animals and Man, there was no compatibility between them. They could not procreate. They could not be fruitful and multiply. Compatibility is much more than just getting along with someone. Compatibility is workability, synergy, camaraderie, the ability to merge thoughts and ideas together to create success for everyone. It is the ability to sit down and reason together to create solutions and ideas that will affect the greater good. It would not have been possible for Adam to sit with one of the monkeys and have conversation with him about his dreams, goals or aspirations. It would have been impossible for Adam to inquire of the fish how they see the sea or the inspiration they get from watching the rivers flow.

Although compatibility does not mean that two people have to have the same character, attitudes, dreams, passions or interests, they must have certain attributes that are similar. Adam was not compatible with the animals, so God saw that he was alone. He couldn't be friends and share moments with them, he couldn't date them or marry them, he could not procreate with them.

In some relationships, compatibility may not always be considered the most important factor, but it does play a huge role. When you meet new people, you normally do not walk up to them and start sharing your whole life story, nor is there a past, present or future application that shows you every detail about them. You discuss certain life experiences and views about certain issues, you share personal stories. It is often most interesting when you can relate to their story or something in their story or their experience. As you get to know the person, you may realize that you have many things in common. If you do, you become fond of this person and begin to spend more time with them. If you don't, the friendship most times remains at an acquaintance level.

But when there is no compatibility at all, the relationship will generally not go any further than the introduction and small talk.

**Compatibility in Friendship:** When friends have similar interests and passions, they often seem close, compared to when they do not have similar interests and passions. This is often the distinction between associates and friends. You can associate with people who have similar interests. You can interact at meetings and social gatherings and show love to each other. But a friend is one that has common interests. They have similar tastes, similar ideas and beliefs, similar values and experiences and enjoy many of the same things.

**Compatibility in Romantic Relationships:** It is amazing when someone in a relationship says or does something in a way that the other person might have said or done it. It fuels the relationship, makes it more interesting and increases compatibility. When they have discussions and agree on certain matter it is beautiful and their love grows rapidly. Conversely, if they argue about everything and have many disagreements, it increases tension and affects communication. Compatibility plays a major role in finding satisfaction and absolute happiness in a relationship, even when things are not perfect.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE ADAM AND EVE EFFECT

*"Love is friendship that has caught fire.  
It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence,  
sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times.  
It settles for less than perfection and  
makes allowances for human weaknesses." ~Ann Landers*

#### **Building Relationships**

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

It is a good when you are able to maintain healthy relationships, as it is very important in setting goals if you desire to have a successful life. At some point in your life, you may have to rely on some of these people for support, guidance, advice and favor. You can establish or destroy professional relationships depending on how you engage with business partners. These relationships can help build or destroy your career. In life, success, whether business or pleasure, is more about who you know than what you know. It is not really about how much you know or how good you are, but who you know. The relationships and partnerships you make along the way help you to achieve success now or later.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #10**

##### **Appreciate every relationship.**

However, building good relationships does not mean that you have to force your way into friendships or romantic relationships. It means not ruining the relationships you have, first and foremost, then keeping a good relationship with every new person you meet, because you do not know who you will need in the future. People who try to force their way into relationships with

the "important people" are not hard to spot and they do not leave a good impression. It is best to humble yourself and be honest with everyone you meet, whether or not they are popular or important. The truth is, the help and assistance you need in the future might not come from the people you see today. Appreciate every relationship.

It is important to build good relationships with everyone around you, though all the relationships may not have the same level of significance. You will be closer to some people more than you will be to others, but it is very important to establish good relationships, no matter how uninteresting or unimportant or unpopular they appear on the surface. You never know who you will need in the future.

There is no magic formula to building relationships and partnerships. It doesn't just happen because two people are together in one place or work together in a team. Solid, trusting and successful relationships take time to build and develop. It will take time to get to know the other person, what they stand for and represent, how they react to certain things, what they believe and how much passion they have for the commonalities you share. Trust needs to be built and commitment needs to be established.

God created us to connect and build relationships. We are expected to interact, get involved in different activities and build relationships. We all have a part to play in world reformation and transformation. No one can do everything by himself or herself. It just doesn't work. Relationships are vital to our survival. I will discuss how to foster great relationships later in this book.

### **The Adam and Eve Partnership**

After God made all the different animals and realized that they were not compatible with Adam, He decided to make someone compatible, someone that looked just like Adam. He put Adam to sleep, removed his rib from his side and formed woman. She was named "woman"

because she was made from the rib of the man, a perfect companion. Under this sub-topic we will be using Adam and Eve as the lens for viewing different forms of relationship.

In the middle of the garden, Adam stood feasting his eyes upon the exquisite beauty of creation. Enveloped in delight, staring at the healthy trees and how majestic they looked, Adam focused his eyes on the waters and saw its folding and unfolding. He saw the animals that God made and the diversity they portrayed. He spent some quality time looking over everything in his environment. Then there was a sudden feeling of loneliness that was born in his heart. He lacked companionship. He lacked relationship. He was master of all creation, but he needed a companion. He was master of all things that existed, was given power over it all, but even in all that, deep down inside of him, he had a feeling of loneliness.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #11**

#### **We cannot survive without friendships.**

Then God created Eve. She was like Adam. A certain joy entered into his heart the moment he saw her and he said, "*This is flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone*" (Genesis 2:23). She was perfect, compatible, similar. She thought, moved, saw and felt. She had purpose and the ability to achieve it, just like Adam, and he loved her so.

Let's bring this relationship to modern day. Think about the shift that takes place from being single, to finding someone that you are attracted to, someone whose view of life is similar to yours, whose voice is the perfect pitch that beats melody upon your eardrums, and whose behavior and attitude towards you and others makes a lot of sense to you. When you begin to develop a relationship with this person, the loneliness ceases. That feeling you felt when you had to do things on your own, without that special someone very close to you that you could talk to and seek their opinion or advice, dissipates. You have found that someone with whom you can be free to express the feelings you would otherwise leave buried deep within. Finding them

brings a joy that you never experienced. Adam was overwhelmed by Eve. She made a big difference in everything he had known before she came into his life.

Romantic relationships are exciting and fulfilling. Getting married in the long run is even more amazing. We were made to find connection in relationships, not to live in isolation and navigate through life alone, but to share, experience and create moments with that significant person who was created just for us. We can live without this type of a relationship, but there will most likely be a void inside that no one can fill. Some people fill this gap with other things, like work, career, hobbies or extracurricular activities. But having a partner with whom you can share moments and spend the rest of your life is priceless. It is not good for man to be alone. It is good to be with someone and enjoy happiness with them.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #12**

**Friendship is universal and is the bedrock of any good relationship in family, businesses, ministry and marriage.**

Let's look at Adam and Eve's relationship in terms of friendship. We cannot survive without friends. Unlike romantic relationships or even marriage that we can choose not to participate in, we cannot survive without friendships. It is possible to have friends and choose to be away from them at some point due to a change in location or interests, but having no friend relationships means living a lonely life. Friendships are very crucial and important in shaping our lives. We meet new people from time to time that help us understand a new concept of friendship. We learn to share, to communicate, to care for others, feel different emotions and share important moments in our lives. Friendship is universal and is the bedrock of any good relationship in family, businesses, ministry and marriage.

Friends are very important and play a major role in our lives. It is important to have someone you can call or visit when you feel lonely. In this millennial age, we can always send text messages when we cannot see each other physically or speak on the telephone and discuss

what is happening in our lives. I believe Adam's joy was full when Eve came along because he now had a friend he could talk to, someone with whom he could share ideas, discuss the beauty of the garden, someone he could miss when he didn't see her and go looking for and probably find her staring at the flowers somewhere in the garden.

Imagine being locked in a room alone, with books, beautiful clothes and shoes, but not having the ability to speak to anyone. No one comes to check on you and you cannot call anyone for anything. During the first two days, or if you're very strong, first week or even maybe two weeks, you might occupy yourself with reading or just thinking and creating in your imagination. But after a while, you will start to feel a void and develop a desire to find out what is happening outside of that room. You will crave companionship, someone with whom you can talk and spend time. If you do not satisfy that desire, it may cost you your sanity. Now, imagine finally connecting to someone, the joy that you would feel and the great love you would develop for that person. This is how Adam felt.

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #13**  
**Friendships are vital to our wellbeing.**

Friendships are very important. Some people are good at making friends, while others have more of a challenge. But overall, it is good to have friends and build relationships with people in your school, workplace, church or organizations. Friendships are vital to our wellbeing.

**Come into Agreement**

*"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)*

When we look at partnerships using Adam and Eve as the point of focus, we automatically hear echoes of the word, "agreement." Partnerships cannot thrive if there is no

agreement. You can work very closely with someone and not see eye-to-eye, someone who thinks north when you are thinking south, has thoughts and actions that are contrary to yours, does things you do not like and refuses to change for you at all. But partnerships can only work when there is agreement.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #14**

##### **Teamwork is essential in any type of relationship.**

Adam loved Eve and probably agreed with her on many things. He trusted her. Their relationship became one of teamwork, which may be why she brought the fruit back to Adam to eat. Because of their relationship, she could not do something without including Adam, and he accepted it because he trusted her and valued their relationship. Even though he already received prior instruction from God that they should not eat from that particular tree, Adam agreed with his wife and together they ate of the tree. Teamwork is essential in any type of relationship.

## **God and Man**

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)*

We are called to connect with man and our environment, but more importantly we are called to connect with God himself. We are expected to develop a relationship with God and have Him direct us in the fulfillment of the purpose for which He created us. We cannot possibly live our lives without this relationship, as it plays a major role in every aspect of our lives. We read in the Bible that God is interested in having a relationship with Man. He went out of his way to reconcile us back to Himself even though the relationship between God and Man was broken by Adam and Eve's disobedience. We see in the account of Adam that God would come in the cool of the day and commune with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8).

God created us to be distinct and placed great value on our lives. This can be seen in how much He loves us and desires to have a relationship with us. His plan is to be completely involved in our lives every step of the way. We are called to be in right relationship with Him and to put Him first in everything that we desire to do, to inquire of Him and seek His guidance through the help of the Holy Spirit. Through our prayers and study to know more about God and building our lives in a way that pleases Him, we develop relationship with Him. When we see him as Father and not just a God that resides in heaven, we feel a sense of security and assurance. It fertilizes our faith and grows our hope in the One who has our lives in the palm of His hand.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #15**

**We are expected to connect with the world around us and with the God-in-us.**

We are expected to connect with the world around us and with the God-in-us, because it is not good for Man to be alone. It is better to engage with others, as well as with God. Our

connection with God starts mainly in building our faith and believing in Him, His existence and His power to save. The Bible says in the book of Matthew, "*seek and you shall find.*" This is an assurance to us that when we seek God, we will find Him. The Bible also states that he is standing at the door of our heart knocking and waiting for us to open unto Him (Revelation 3:20).

In our connection with people, it takes willingness on our part and the development of some natural skills to develop good, fruitful, trustworthy and productive relationships with others. Sometimes it happens naturally. For example, when a person approaches you and attempts to engage with you, which is why it is important to develop a positive, welcoming attitude toward others, and the ability to communicate effectively. Man is not an island unto himself. We cannot survive on our own. We were not even created to survive on our own. We need the influence of other people in our lives. We need to also influence others and be a help to them, as well. We perform better and are more successful when we connect with people. Step out of your comfort zone and connect.



## CHAPTER 3

### LEVELS OF PARTNERSHIP

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?"*  
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-11)

#### **What Is Partnership?**

##### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #16**

**The true essence of a person cannot be measured when he/she lives in isolation.**

The true essence of a person cannot be measured when he/she lives in isolation. The level of success, failure or relevance of an individual or a group of people is based on the biased need to outdo others. The accolades an individual receives is a testament that others have failed in the same venture or performed less than the one who received the accolades. This truth establishes in the heart of some people the need to compete with others to reach a goal faster or better than anyone else. This feeling of wanting to be the best is not unique to the secular world, but it is also evident in the religious community. A pastor with a large congregation will be deemed in the eye of the public to more successful than one with a small congregation. This often pushes people to the extreme and squelches their desire and need for partnership.

The term "partnership" seems to be overrated, and in some instances, it is underused or totally forgotten. It has been used in different instances to mean several things, other than the formation of unity between desired participants. The idea of partnership transcends mutual understanding and is often interpreted as rights and obligations. This is the case with people who have an entitlement mentality. They refer to partnership as a legitimate benefit that should be derived from a course of action or in the line of duty. This misconception of partnership has

called for a concerted effort to make an objective analysis of the unfolding parameters that are used to describe partnership, in an attempt to clarify the true meaning of partnership and awaken the awareness of everyone to efficient partnership lifestyles. Allow me to give a clear and concise definition of partnership and identify the parameters involved in the overview of the tenets of partnership.

There are two schools of thought to consider in stating a concise definition of partnership. One school of thought focuses on the secular side, which considers the immediate benefits of partnership, while the other focuses on the long-term effects and benefits of partnership. In general, partnership can be defined as a group of people agreeing to work together to achieve the same goal. There are differing views on the subject matter of partnership.

According to *Dictionary.com*, partnership is described as, "the state or condition of being a partner; participation; association; joint interest." *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary* defines partnership as "an arrangement in which people engage in an activity or business with one another or share something with each other." The *Encarta Online Encyclopedia* more specifically addresses the cooperative nature of partnership, which it defines as, "cooperation between people or groups working together; an organization formed by two or more people or groups who work together for some purpose." Though all of these definitions are good, especially with regard to the aspects of cooperation and responsibilities, they do not capture the essence of partnership within Man's relationship with God.

It is God's desire to be in partnership with Man. The Hebrew word for partnership is *koinonia*, which translated to English means "fellowship." Partnership is synonymous to fellowship. This definition of partnership is supported by a divine theological premise that is based on the inspiration of God in the lives of people. The Bible is full of relevant verses that admonish the body of Christ to fellowship together and be in unity of mind and in spirit. "*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another*" (Proverbs 27:17).

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #17**

### **Partnerships ultimately exist for the accomplishment of common actions and set goals.**

There are some sectors of society that struggle with the need for the body of Christ to partner with one another, especially across doctrinal divide. A Catholic believer will question partnership with a Pentecostal believer despite the claim that every believer is a member of one body, which is of Christ. The primary issue with regard to partnerships in ministry is purpose. Defining the purpose and stating a clear reason for partnership is perhaps the fundamental reason why the body of Christ has not been able to take advantage of the myriad of privileges that are available in partnership with one another and with God.

The parameters to measure partnership include genuine involvement in a partnership that is demonstrated by commitment and trust. The parties of an effective and successful partnership should not be passive, but they should be active and responsive. Likewise, there should be the acceptance of responsibility demonstrated by a readiness to fulfill the purpose of the partnership. The parties should demonstrate a readiness to pay the price of partnership. This simple definition is profound in that it is rooted in action and purpose. Partnerships do not exist merely for the rights or identities of those involved. Partnerships ultimately exist for the accomplishment of common actions and set goals.

### **God - The Originator of Partnership**

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Genesis 1:26)*

Everything in life has a source and the source of anything determines the value it commands. My decision to buy an iPhone instead of a Samsung mobile phone is purely speculative based on my biased interest in the source of the iPhone. Both phones have the

capability to perform the basic function of making and receiving call. Likewise, it is very important to understand the origin of partnership, provided it has any origin at all, before entering into an agreement.

Throughout Scripture, the dynamics of partnership are displayed. The dynamics of partnership are recorded among men and in the relationship between Man and God. However, to have a clear-cut idea of what partnership entails, it is better to seek the origin of partnership, as the best way to learn about anything is to ask the manufacturer. Who is the manufacturer of partnership and how did it all began?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #18**

#### **There was connection and partnership even in the Godhead.**

The biblical account of creation states that when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was formless and void. Void means empty. It is the state of nothingness. The earth was nothing before it had an encounter with the creative power of the Almighty God. When the creative power of God came into action, things began to fall into shape and could be described with language. This makes God the manufacturer of the earth and everything found within it. We are not certain exactly how God worked to create all He created, but we see in verse 26 of Genesis 1, He said, "*Let us make man...*"

There was a hint as to how God was able to exercise the power of creation. Obviously, He did not do it alone. The words "let us" signify plurality, more than one. God did not create the world by Himself. He did not create the world alone. He had help. The "us" referred to the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. There was connection and partnership even in the Godhead.

This is the first act of partnership recorded in the Bible, and God is still in the business of going into partnership with people today. God is still calling for partnership like He did at the

foundation of the universe. The question is, can you hear Him calling? Think about it. There is no documentation in the annals of history that suggest any type partnership that precedes the partnership called for by God in the creation of the universe. Not only did God originate the concept partnership, He also made it a glaring truth that partnership is part of His divine nature.

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." (John 1:1-3)*

John revealed that in the beginning of the entire world, there was the Word, and the Word was with God. God created all things in partnership with the Word of God, which became flesh and that is Jesus. After God created Man, He also created woman. God created a woman for the man to foster the importance of partnership. God's idea of partnership is paramount in our quest to understand partnership. It was God's idea to create Man after Himself. God created Man to be like Him. This implies that Man has the same characteristics as God. Man should function like God and think like God. The actions of Man should reflect the nature and the character of God.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #19**

#### **Partnership is part of God's divine nature.**

In life, partnership cannot be viewed as an option, but a necessity. It is not an option for a puppy to bark, barking is part of its nature. It is not an option for a lion to roar, or the fishes to live in water, that is the nature thereof. In fact, it is abnormal to see a dog that cannot bark or a lion that cannot roar. Likewise, it is abnormal to see a person that refuses to be in partnership with others or with God. God wants Man to relate with the world around him in partnership.

It is true that Man later disobeyed God and fell out of grace, but the nature and the character of God never left Man. We must understand that the gifts of God are without

repentance (Romans 11:29). Moreover, there has been reconciliation between Man and God at Cavalry. The redemption at Calvary has given Man the mandate to come boldly to the throne of grace and obtain mercy from the Most High.

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #20**

**The actions of Man should reflect the nature and the character of God.**

## CHAPTER 4

### THE COVENANT

*"If one accepts the terms of the covenant and obeys God's law, he or she receives the blessings associated with the covenant." ~Russell M. Nelson*

#### **The Paradigm of Partnership**

The paradigm or pattern of partnership runs throughout the Bible. To only think of partnership as a sequence of actions to justify human ability to meet a target would severely diminish the power of partnership. It does not seem right to think that partnership is what you evoke only when you need the support of others, and when the need for such support has met its expiration, the partnership ceases. This is the way some people to relate to God. They see God as the one to call upon only when they need help. When they no longer need God, they do not feel the need to reach out to Him in service or in prayer, which is certainly not part of the paradigm of partnership. Effective partnership follows a particular pattern. A critical study of this pattern is the key to understanding what makes effective partnerships active and long-lasting.

The fundamental truth is that partnerships are called into effect through covenant and relationship. Needs and wants have been the foundation of many partnership, but this is not true partnership. It is merely a form of partnership. Needs and wants cannot be the foundation upon which effective, dynamic partnerships are built. Covenant, relationship, agreement, synergy, synchronicity, trust and an overall common goal that is greater than the parties individually, should be the basis upon which effective partnerships are formed. God's decision to bless Isaac during the famine can only be attributed to the covenant established through the partnership of Abraham and God (Genesis 26:1-33). While Abraham is referred to as a friend of God (James 2:23), this friendship is sponsored by a covenant between Abraham and God and the covenant is the basis of his partnership with God.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #21**

### **Partnerships require action.**

*"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3)*

Partnership requires action. The first action of Abraham was obedience to leave his father, mother and relatives and go to an unknown land on God's word alone. Abraham had to leave his comfort zone, his area of influence and dominance. He had to be obedient to God, leave certainty, and part with his ego to go to an unknown, unfamiliar destination. Abraham was considered righteous because he staggered not at the promises of God (Romans 4:20). It was not an easy decision to make, yet Abraham did. He took action in his relationship with God and God reciprocated.

Partnership is often more compelling than friendship. A friend is under no obligation to act in a particular way or manner. In partnership, there is no room to take the other person for granted. Abraham understood this and used it to his own advantage. He was actively involved in partnership with God, even to the extent that he was willing to sacrifice his only son in obedience to God's directive. Isn't it wonderful to note that God offered His only son too, just like Abraham offered Isaac. Isaac was in total submission to the will of his father and Jesus was in total submission to the will of God, His father, even unto death. This theological premise reveals that the partnership between God and Abraham did not just stop at God's mighty hand of blessings resting upon the life of Abraham. It extended as a blessing to the entire world.

Also, Moses had the tedious work of judging the entire nation of Israel. What a Herculean task. It must have been an interesting experience to sit all day and listen to numerous cases of disagreement between the Israelites. It is evident that Moses continued to struggle under the heavy yoke of having to be the judge in all matters, just as his father-in-law had warned him.



Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, advised Moses to appoint a lesser judge, and Moses would only judge the cases that were beyond the capability of the elders that were appointed as judge over the tribes of Israel. Jethro understood the power of partnership and covenant.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #22**

### **Partnership is not a product of a coercion or force.**

Jesus also developed partnerships along His journey. He chose 12 disciples. *"Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to Him those He wanted, and they came to Him. He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons."* (Mark 3:13-15)

Jesus even went further beyond the 12 disciples to anoint the 72. The 72 followers were sent out in twos to bear witness of Jesus. As powerful and anointed as Jesus was, He still needed partners to ensure that the work committed into his hands by God the Father was completed and did not suffer. He needed partners of the vision and mission. He needed someone to empower in this regard and to commit the life of men into their care. Jesus is still in need of partners, as he has not stopped reaching out to the lost souls.

During His earthly ministry and even after His resurrection, Jesus' model was one of partnership. Jesus did not abandon His apostles after He ascended into heaven. He continued His partnership with them through the Holy Spirit. The 12 and the 72 were not forced or coerced into partnering with Jesus. They partook of the partnership of their own free will and volition. They could have said no and Jesus would not have forced the partnership on them. Partnership is not a product of a coercion or force. Partnership is a product of free will and agreement. Although partnership is deliberate, it is never forceful.

Likewise, the Apostle Paul laid down the pattern of "mentoring for ministry" by quickly raising up local church leaders who were then to *"...equip the saints for the work of ministry"* (Ephesians 4:11-12).

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #23**

**Effective leaders always raise up other effective leaders.**

*"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." (Ephesians 4:11-12).*

Romans 16 clearly announces the testimony of the Apostle Paul and his commitment to the principles of partnership, especially in the work of the ministry. The Apostle Paul left behind a legacy of many great leaders. Effective leaders always raise up other effective leaders. Rather than holding on to all of the leadership authority, they share it with others around them— thereby multiplying their leadership influence. In other words, they multiply through mentoring through partnership.

*"After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it." (Mark 16:19-20)*

### **Divine Partnership**

*"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building."  
(1 Corinthians 3:9)*

The perfection of partnership can be found in the purpose it serves. The type of partnership that can guarantee perfection is the divine partnership. The term "divine" transcends human understanding. Divinity is sponsored by the revelation of the knowledge of God in man and sustained by the hunger to know more. No wonder the Apostle Paul wrote, *"That I may*

*know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." (Philippians 3:10)*

There is a knowledge required to function in the grace of divine partnership. A partnership is only divine when God is the center of the partnership. Sometimes we like to make our arrangement and then try to draw God into it. God must be the one upon whom the partnership is founded for the partnership to be divine. The Apostle Paul is one man who has found the truth about divine partnership and expressed this by making an emphasis of the nature of this divine-human partnership when he said that we are "...God's fellow workers" (1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 6:1, 1 Thessalonians 3:2). Evidently, Paul did not preach one thing and practice another. He walked his talk when it came to partnerships in ministry. He did exactly as he admonished others to do.

*"He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:17)*

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #24**

**Only the presence and power of God can hold together human relationships,  
whether in marriage, ministry or business.**

Only the presence and power of God can hold together human relationships, whether in marriage, ministry or business. Without His mediating presence, relationships fragment and fall apart. When Christians ignore or are disobedient to His presence, marriages pull apart, ministry partnerships pull apart, churches collapse, mission organizations fail, para-church ministries dissolve and people separate. Only in Jesus Christ can partnerships hold together rather than pull apart.

Our relationship with Jesus Christ determines our relationship with God and our relationship with the Holy Spirit. When we have a living relationship with Jesus Christ, we automatically have a relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. But if we do not have a

relationship with Jesus Christ, it is impossible to have a relationship or partnership with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The scriptures are very clear about this. *"Jesus said: 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6). "If you really knew Me, you would know My Father as well. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him... Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father... Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me?... The words I say to you are not just My own. Rather, it is the Father living in Me, who is doing His work. Believe Me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me'" (John 14:6-11).*

Jesus Christ must be at the center of every authentic spiritual partnership. My question to you is, Is Jesus Christ the center of your human relationships and ministry partnerships?

## **The Doctrine of Partnership**

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #25**

#### **Authentic Christianity is a lifelong celebration of community.**

The biblical call of partnership goes from self to the Savior, from isolation to community, from independence to dependence. Christianity is a call to total dependence on God, followed by a call to a growing dependence on others. While other religions emphasize independence and isolation, Christianity emphasizes intimacy and interdependence. Authentic Christianity is a lifelong celebration of community.

In Mark, we read about Christ's resurrection partnership with the early Christians. *"And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs" (Mark 16:20).* Partnership is the prevailing principle of the

New Testament. It is the authenticating mark of Christian fellowship. The question for Christian leaders is, is partnership the basis of your life and ministry?

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THE EFFECTS OF PARTNERSHIP**

*"Though one may be overpowered,  
two can defend themselves.  
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."  
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-11)*

#### **What Qualifies You for Partnership?**

The most important prerequisite for partnership is relational orientation. Some people do this more naturally than others because of their personality and temperament. By nature, they are "people persons." They are socially outgoing. They love being with people, and as a result they are naturally drawn to people and people are naturally drawn to them. Others, however, learn to become people-focused through time, training, effort and discipline. It is not something they do naturally. While many Christian leaders are good at developing functional relationships, they are often poor at building covenant relationships. Good people skills are important assets in effective leadership and partnership, whether in marriage or ministry. If you cannot lead in your personal family, you will not be able to lead in the family of God.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #26**

**Servant leaders always lead through love.**

There is no such thing as an effective leader who does not work well with people. If you cannot work well with people, you cannot lead. If you want to become a good leader, then you must first become an authentic lover of people. Servant leaders always lead through love. In all probability, Saul was not a very relational individual before his conversion on the Damascus Road. In his B.C. days, his relationships were characterized by racial pride, cultural prejudice, religious legalism, anger, hostility and aggression, certainly not attributes that draw you to

people. But something or rather, someone radically changed his life to the degree that his temperament was transformed from legalism to love.

Studies have shown that relational skills are one of the biggest determining factors for success in life, whether in marriage, ministry, business, education or any other "people-focused" pursuit. As we have already seen, Jesus made this point crystal clear when He said to His disciples, *"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"* (John 13:35). If you cannot love people, you cannot lead people, because leading is based on loving.

### **The Price of Partnership**

*"However, the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God which cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver." (2 Samuel 24:24)*

Partnership as a practice or deed is not cheap. There is a nagging, erroneous, objective view that relates partnership to charity work. Charity work is essential and indeed relevant in our communities all around the globe. However, it is a far cry away from the dictates and functionalities of partnership overall. Partnership is consistently valued with a price tag. This price can sometimes be adjudged as expensive. There is always a defining and expensive price tag that accompanies partnership.

Authentic covenant partnership is costly, but the cost cannot simply be measured in currency base. This implies that you cannot quantify the cost of partnership based on dollars, pounds, lire or any other currency of the world. The cost of authentic partnership can be measured in the value of time, effort, availability, emotions, resources and responsiveness. Authentic partnership is founded on the solid rock of blood, sweat and tears that is consistent for a long period of time. Whether in marriages, parenting or pastoring, partnership is often an

expensive price to pay. *"For God so love the world that he gave his only begotten son."* (John 3:16)

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #27**

**Authentic partnership is founded on the solid rock of blood, sweat and tears.**

There are no cheap, quick or easy partnerships, whether in marriage, ministry or business. How much did it cost the Almighty Himself to bring us into partnership with Him? It cost God something. It cost Him is only begotten Son. God gave all that He could give. *"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends"* (John 15:13). This is the ultimate prize. God does not require our life in partnership. There is no price too heavy or costlier than what God did for the partnership we enjoy today. Whatever we are able to give as cost in our partnership is a mere response to the established love of the Father that has given us His Son. Does God want us to pay a price for our partnership? The simple answer again is yes!

*"If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)*

The older we grow in grace and might as leaders, the less we are in control of our own lives and destiny. Jesus reminded Peter of the "price of the cross" after His resurrection. *"I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."* Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God." (John 21:18-19)

The Apostle Paul was willing to go to any length and pay any price in order to build transformational, cross-cultural relationships and partnerships. In his second letter to his partners in Corinth, he further described the price of partnership in the Gospel.



*"We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited.*

*Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything." (2 Corinthians 6:3-10)*

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #28**

### **Pain is the price of partnership.**

Authentic partnership comes at a great cost, a cost that most are not willing to pay. Millions pursue possessions, instead of partnership. They mistakenly think that wealth is determined by riches, when God defines it in terms of relationship. Pain is the price of partnership. But if we are willing to pay the price, we will be rich in relationships and partnerships.

### **The Patience of Partnership**

Along with prayer and sacrifice, patience is required in raising up mature leaders and partners. Partnership, just like parenting and pastoring, require a lifestyle of patience. It takes years of patience and perseverance to become a good partner, whether in marriage, ministry or business. This is even more the case when you add the diverse dimensions of different races, backgrounds and cultures. There is nothing more challenging than building mature leaders and authentic, autonomous partners.

There are no shortcuts to building mature partnerships. Immaturity and impatience are the twin destroyers of mature and lasting partnerships. Let me emphasize again the principle, whether in marriage, ministry or business, authentic partnership development takes patience. There are no shortcuts to mature partnerships. They are the products of a life of patience and persistence.

It took patience on the part of Jesus, along with the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, to mature the 12 disciples into effective partners. Jesus spent three intense years in intimate relationship with them. During that time, their partnership was tried and tested under the most diverse circumstances. Together they went through good times and hard times, times of popularity and times of rejection, times in the marketplace and times of solitude, times of worship and wonder, and moments of doubt and despair. Ultimately, their partnership was tested by death. But through it all, Jesus poured Himself into the lives of the men and women who followed Him to the degree that He built partnerships that turned the world upside down in just one generation. Those were the greatest transformational partnerships the world has ever seen.

As we have already seen, it also took patience for Barnabas to mentor and encourage Saul of Tarsus into Paul the Apostle. It required both patience and perseverance to see Saul gradually transformed from the blasphemer to the believer, from the persecutor to the preacher, from the apostate to the apostle. It took great patience to help Paul grow from tradition to truth, from legalism to love. *"...live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."* (Ephesians 4:1-3)

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #29**

**Without patience, partnership in either ministry, marriage or business will not blossom.**

Paul went on to mentor scores of other young leaders by building a transformational partnership with them. In his mentoring of Timothy, we can also hear this exhortation about pastoral patience. *"You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings"* (2 Timothy 3:10). Paul further exhorted Timothy about the need for patience in partnership when he wrote him his own "last will and testament," after which he was martyred for his faith and fidelity to Christ. *"Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction."* (2 Timothy 4:2).

Without patience, partnership in either ministry, marriage or business will not blossom. God designed them to go hand-in-hand through life. One builds upon the other. If you cannot build a good partnership in marriage, you will not be able to build a good partnership in ministry and so on. The integrity of your public life is dependent upon the integrity of your private life. When we become impatient and immature in marriage, it can soon spill over into ministry and ultimately, into business. The greatest way to build strong ministry partnerships is to first build a strong marital partnership. Both require a lifetime of patience.

### **The Purpose of Partnership**

The purpose of partnership is to bring people into maturity. You cannot become mature spiritually or emotionally in isolation. One of the reasons God created marriage was to give us the relational context through which we can live with an "other-orientation" rather than a self-orientation." No other human relationship brings us face-to-face with our own sins, selfishness, pride, insecurity and immaturity as marriage. Marriage affords the opportunity to die to self daily.

The purpose of partnership in marriage is to bring one to spiritual, emotional and relational maturity. Tragically, most couples "bail out" of marriage through divorce or desertion,

rather than stick it out so they can mature emotionally and relationally. When a person runs away from their marriage partnership, they become emotionally retarded and relationally stunted in their lives. Because they never endure the pain of partnership, they never enjoy the pleasure of partnership.

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #30**  
**Marriage is an invitation to die to self.**

Let me emphasize the principle again. Marriage is an invitation to die to self. That is the purpose of partnership. Dying to self is at the very heart and soul of a healthy marital partnership. Both members of the partnership must die to self so that they can live for each other. Nothing short of total surrender to God will it be possible for a marriage to blossom and mature. Note again these ancient words of wisdom about marriage from the Apostle Paul.

*"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.<sup>28</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—<sup>30</sup> for we are members of his body. "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:21-33)*

Effective parenting is built upon the same principle of dying to self. Every mother personally knows the cost of birthing a child. For the child to survive and thrive, there must

be a constant dying to self at the detriment of her own gratification. But the end result is worth it all.

### **Partnership Breeds Continuity**

God's agenda is that there might be transference of duties and responsibility from one generation to another. God loves continuity. He demonstrated this when He announced that the household of Aaron shall be dedicated to the service of the Lord. He also had the same intentions for the prophet Eli, but for the covenant breaking behavior of his son, the partnership was terminated and renewed with prophet Samuel. No wonder Samuel was vexed at the action of the Israelites when they requested for monarchical rule to replace the theocratic rule. Samuel considered this act as an impediment on his partnership with God.

God's promises are from age to age, to sustain His partnership with the generation of men, provided the deeds are yet to be revoked by the actions and inactions of men. It is His will that men continue in partnership from one generation to the other. In the New Testament, we find the exemplary life of the Apostle Paul has engineered the rapid spread of the gospel via mentorship. This is true when we consider mentorship as a relevant step in partnership. The purpose of God's partnership with man is to impact the human race with the God-kind of life. In the same way, He expects us to relate with one another, leaving an indelible mark on those that partner with us in actualizing our God-given dreams.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #31**

##### **Continuity in partnerships is not automatic.**

The Bible is full of information on how fellowship. Jesus had a partnership with His disciples that resulted in them working as effectively as their Master. Continuity in partnerships is not automatic. Even though continuity should be the end product of a partnership, it has to be

intentionally developed. It will take a conscious and a deliberate action by the parties in the partnership to enjoy the end product that fosters continuity.

Let's consider the relationship between Elisha and Elijah in clear comparison with the relationship between Elisha and Gehazi. Elisha was already a successful farmer and had a big farm to his credit. He was wealthy. By the standard of his age, he cannot be referred to as poor. He had possessions and servants. Elisha, despite his wealth, came in contact with Elijah and decided to partner with Elijah as a subject to bring the news of God's intention and will to His people. It was recorded that Elisha abandoned his farming business to follow Elijah.

Soon there was to be a departure. Elijah was to be taken away by God and Elisha was able to take a double portion of his anointing, because he left all to stay rooted in the partnership. However, Elisha could not transfer his anointing to anyone. Gehazi was supposed to also get a transference, but he did not. That was the end of the flow of the anointing. It was not passed on.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **LET'S PLAY BALL**

*"The best teamwork comes from men who are working independently toward one goal in unison."*  
~James Cash Penney

#### **T.E.A.M. (Together Everyone Achieves More)**

Teamwork is the basis of effective partnerships. When you examine the acronym for team, you immediately understand the importance of team in business, family, ministry, the marketplace and many other area of our lives. Teamwork is the result of the joint efforts of two or more people coming together to achieve a common goal. We all strive to achieve our dreams and aspirations in life. However, many people fail to understand that some dreams and aspirations cannot be achieved alone. You need the support of a team.

Teamwork is essential in any partnership. If you want to be great, if you want to be successful, if you want to achieve big in life, you cannot build alone. You need the power of a team. You need a group of like-minded individuals with a common goal, common passions, common desires and common values. You need a group of individuals who all want to win and will go to great lengths collectively so that each member on the team can win individually.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #32**

**Success is a full body sport and requires contact.**

Many people live their lives within their own individual circles, concerned about "their four and no more." They are concerned about their family, their business, their dreams, their goals, their plans. But what they fail to realize is that in order to really achieve the fullness of what God has planned for them, they must connect, partner and be in relationship with other likeminded individuals. True success in business, marriage, ministry, family or life in general

cannot be achieved in isolation, nor can true success be achieved by any one individual alone. True success requires a team, partnership, covenant, relationship. Like soccer, success is a full body sport and requires contact.

We often hear the phrase, "Teamwork makes the dream work." This is very true. However, there must first be a team that is formed around a common dream, and then each part of the team must have the "we" in the forefront of their minds. The "I" must be eradicated. The "me, myself and I" mentality does not work in this paradigm. If any player on the team enters the playing field with the "I" as his/her dominate view, the team will fail at every attempt to be successful. If you are going to build a successful business, ministry, marriage, or other relationship, know that it is a full body sport. Let's play ball.

What do unsuccessful soccer teams and unsuccessful people have in common? They have no goals. Successful teams score lots of goals. Successful people set lots of goals and achieve them. In soccer and in life you cannot be successful without 1) setting goals, and 2) finding the most effective way to score (make it happen). Let's look at the ball as the object or the goal. What do you want in life? Everyone is reaching for the goal, but only a few are going to capture it and win the game. The world is your playground and you must know how to play and move around strategically if you want to win in this life.

### **What Is Your Strategy?**

A soccer team consists of 11 outfield players, divided in three sections - the defense, the midfield and the forwards. The most valuable players on the soccer team are the strikers, because they get the job done and put the ball into the back of the net consistently. The strikers are hard to find, but if a team has no goal threat, it cannot be successful. Good strikers get in position to take advantage of the opportunities. They normally put the ball away. Good strikers have confidence in their own ability because they constantly and consistently practice.



## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #33**

### **Team players encourage those around them to do better.**

In life, very few people are great "strickers." It is a fact that 80% of the wealth is controlled by 20% of the people. Many people limit themselves, so they do not see the opportunities in life, and when they do get in position to score, their success rate is oftentimes very low.

The defenders are the least valuable players on the soccer team because their role is easier to fill and requires less creativity. They defend a position and prevent the opposition from scoring. Their role requires them to just be there and defend. They react to danger. In life, many people are "defenders" or negative thinkers. Some do not like change, others fear it. They prefer to stay in their comfort zones.

### **Distributing Responsibility**

Team players encourage those around them to do better. They do not hurt people on the way up, they help those around them, and are willing to share their knowledge, skills and expertise with the team. When people talk about great team players, they seldom mention the manager responsible for them, but the manager plays an important role. The same can be said for life coaches, their reward is in seeing the potential and goals of their clients achieved. A good manager can turn an average player into a good player. A good coach will enable their clients to fulfill their full potential. A great manager can turn a good player into a great player. A great coach will enable their clients to fulfill their potential and exceed their expectations.

In the game of life, as in the game of soccer, people can only go so far by themselves. Those who overachieve are the ones who realize this and find the right person to assist them on their path. Teamwork allows for the goals to be met without one person shouldering all of the weight. The workload is distributed among the team members. If the work is distributed evenly,

then one person does not feel the stress of the task. Oftentimes, within a team, some people fail to delegate the work to others, which causes them to become exhausted or make mistakes.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #34**

**Teamwork allows for the goals to be met without one person shouldering all the weight.**

Do you remember as a child feeling bored when studying alone? When you work in a team you learn faster. You can easily grasp new concepts because of the experienced team members. Also, if you do not understand something, there is always that one team member who understands everything and can lend assistance.

Everyone in an organization plays an important role in the overall performance of the team. It is no longer enough to be "good." You must be exceptional. It is not enough to have satisfied customers. You must seek to develop a loyal and happy customer base. It is not enough to just maintain the status quo. You must be aggressive, responsive and quick in your delivery of goods and services. The team has to be committed and focused on achieving organizational success.

To solve complex problems and sustain a competitive edge in a rapidly changing marketplace requires a broad mix of skills. It will require harnessing the collective intelligence of everyone in the organization. A team of individuals with highly specialized knowledge and diverse skills will provide you with greater mind power and more innovation. A team will also provide more effective implementation of a solution or idea.

### **Partnerships with Purpose**

There are many stories of men and women who worked together as part of a team or as a duo and dated each other and some that got married from these relationships. It is often seen in many different fields where a man and a woman work together, for example as a band of

musicians or partners on projects, and later develop intimate relationships. However, not all partnerships with the opposite sex lead to a romantic relationship. Some people are meant to be just partners, friends, and teammates. But sadly, in this age and time, many people do not understand the dynamics of partnership. Every partnership has a purpose. God has an intention for every partnership. However, if you do not understand the purpose of the partnership, abuse is inevitable.

A relationship is a type of connection or affiliation with one person or many people. There are many forms of relationships, one of which is the family relationship, the connection between people within a family. This kind of relationship is based on blood and has its limits in the form of expression, as compared to a romantic relationship between two people who have a certain attraction to each other and develop affection for each other. Friendships and partnerships are also different types of relationships.

A good example of two people who worked together for a very long time, achieved great success together, even became famous together as a team, but remained partners only and did not transform their partnership into a romantic relationship, was Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Fred and Ginger were iconic dance partners who made motion pictures together from 1933–1949. They made a total of 10 movies. On screen, they were the romantic couple, but off screen, they were anything else by romantic. The amazing dance partnership of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers was the perfect example of a professional partnership. Their relationship was characterized by the energy they created as dance partners. People loved and followed their art. It is what Ginger Rogers had to offer Fred Astaire that made the package work. She was a great dancer, there was synergy, and when they came together they were able to create.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #35**

**A relationship is not an opportunity for self.**

So, what is partnership and how can one understand the distinction between a partnership and other relationships? Partnership can be explained as an agreement between parties whose aim is attaining success in their mutual interest. Partnerships can also be seen in other forms of relationships. The better the partnership, the more likely the chance of a long-lasting relationship. Partnership is grounded in agreement first to do something, then in what ways to do it, and how much energy, time or money will be contributed by both parties to achieve the set goals.

Many partnerships fail when there is not sufficient agreement on major issues, which is usually a result of either party looking out for themselves only and not considering the joint progress of the team. Oftentimes, they begin to allow their individual emotions to change the original agreement. Partnership in romantic relationships has to do with agreeing to certain things and not looking at the relationship from an emotional standpoint alone, but deciding to become a team in every aspect and to which decisions are made, arguments are settled, events are planned, et cetera. Partnership often defines the friendship.

When we look at the partnership of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, we can infer from their relationship that great partnerships can work, whether or not the parties involved are married or in an intimate relationship. Relationships of any kind can work even when they are held together by certain values, agreements or passion for achieving certain goals. Relationships are not always guaranteed to work. But in order for relationships to work they must be driven by great partnership and a desire on both sides to be successful, regardless of the situations that may arise along the way. In order for a relationship to be successful, there must be an agreement that is fueled with effort from both sides.

A relationship is not an opportunity for self. One plus one equals success. Relationships almost never work or yield very little when entered into for personal gain. For example, a man who decides to become friends with someone he just met just because the relationship would provide a guarantee for the achievement of some personal goal, might eventually receive the

benefits, but the relationship will not last, especially when she is putting effort into making the relationship thrive.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #36**

#### **Relationships are a gift.**

A relationship is a two-party or more venture. You cannot claim to be in a relationship with yourself. Relationships are built for at least two people. How we choose to view relationships and the context we find ourselves in concerning relationships will determine how we manage our relationships and what results they produce. Relationships are supposed to produce great results. They are supposed to yield more than it takes for the relationship to thrive and grow. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers did not get married, but together they made a strong team. Relationships are a gift, and we should appreciate the privilege of this gift.

#### **True Friendship is Partnership**

*"Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul."*

(1 Samuel 18:3)

Let's look at life as a series of heavy weights we have to lift in the midst of different situations and circumstances. At times, we need other people to help us lift these weights. The weights can represent divine ideas and dreams. One word, thought or idea from someone else can create a whole new paradigm for something we are trying to create. Weights could represent adverse or difficult moments in life where we need the support of a friend or someone who has our back to protect us from a certain evil or just anything that isn't good for us. Friendship is birthed out of this concept. Friendship is the boat that carries these ideas in and out of our lives.

Friendship is where we develop some new ideas, new adventures and new perspectives on life. It is also where we learn to share our possessions, time and money with others in exchange for lasting joy. A friend is someone who supports and cheers you on in tough times, shares both your joy and sadness, and sticks with you through thick and thin. A friend is someone who cares about your wellbeing and is committed to you when all else fails. Sometimes we find ourselves needing to be cared for, needing the company of others and not self-sufficient. That is why God said it is not good for man to be alone.

Real friends do not have to be around you all of the time. Sometimes they are near and sometimes they are far away. You do not have to see them often. Real friends can communicate by telephone or email or through social media and still feel the connection. The bond of friendship and the commitment to the relationship is stronger than any distance.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #37**

#### **A true friend is like a faithful brother.**

In Scripture, the relationship between David and Jonathan is a prime example of friendship, covenant and commitment. They had a very unique relationship. David and Jonathan were loyal to each other and saw themselves more as brothers, than just mere friends. Proverbs 17:17 says, *"A friend loves at all times, but a brother is born for adversity."* A true friend is like a faithful brother. Many of us have heard the story of David and Jonathan, but like most people, we have probably never really looked at it a more closely than the very surface of its message.

1 Samuel 18, captures the story of the friendship of David and Jonathan and the jealous king. Jonathan stood up to protect his friend when he noticed a threat to his safety. If we were to take a count and consider friendships, we might find some that exhibit a genuine friendship relationship like that of David and Jonathan. Friendship is not determined by who you grew up with, who lives in the same neighborhood, who attends the same school or who works in the

same company. Friendship is a bond that is based on a series of agreements that may not be stated outright, but can be understood and seen over time. Friends look out for each other and exhibit selflessness.

True friends support and celebrate each other's successes and stand with them in the midst of their trials and failures. If we examine the relationship of David and Jonathan and bring it to life in our modern-day occurrences, here is what true friendship looks like. True friends trust each other and know they will not be judged or looked down upon when trials come. True friends understand that there will be encouragement and correction, in love, when wrong and not criticism and degradation. True friends can face their critics head-on and stand in the midst of criticism.

True friendship is built on loyalty and commitment. We can see how Jonathan stayed loyal to David, even in David's absence. True friends know that even in their absence their friend will gladly stand up and protect their interests. True friends are trustworthy and trust each other. Their words to each other are true. They share their honest opinions and guidance. They do not speak words just to make the other person feel good. They care about each other enough to say the truth about anything, even when it might not sound like something the other person wants to hear.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #38**

#### **True friendship is built on loyalty and commitment.**

True friends are always there for each other. They make each other smile, and they cherish the moments when they are together. They provide a shoulder to lean on in the difficult days and a hand to shake in the great days. True friends accept each other for who they are and exhibit love, regardless of what is happening in their world. David said his love for Jonathan surpassed the love for a woman (2 Samuel 1:26). There was a connection, a partnership that

stood even without signing papers or reciting vows. They considered brothers and they loved each other.

## **Family Partnerships**

*"But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.'"* (Ruth 1:16-17)

The mother/daughter relationship is one that is very delicate. Mothers and daughters have a bond that is oftentimes misunderstood by others. A good example in Scripture of a mother/daughter relationship is the story of Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi. This story comes to life as the perfect example of the love of a mother towards her daughter and a daughter towards her mother. Mother/daughter relationships are essential. Values, ideas and interests have certainly evolved from what they used to be during the times of Naomi and Ruth. There are a lot more differences, a lot more distractions, a lot more expectations and restrictions in this type of relationship.

Naomi was not the birth mother of Ruth, which makes the story very interesting. It calls our attention to the fact that before this type of relationship or any other type of relationship can be successful, the parties have to first develop a mindset that appreciates relationship opportunities and the desire to build solid relationships with people. Some relationships are created, while others you are familial, such as mother/daughter, mother/son, father/daughter and father/son.

Naomi was Ruth's mother-in-law. Naomi had been through a lot as a wife and mother of her two sons. To escape famine, her family moved to a new land and ended up staying there longer than she initially expected. After a while, Naomi, lost her husband and was left to raise



her two sons alone. Time passed and her sons got married in this new land that had now become home for them. As a result, Naomi became a mother of four, both directly and indirectly, and time would reveal the resulting end of this relationship. Later, Naomi's two sons died and she was left with her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. She told them both to remain in that land and find new husbands, as she was traveling to another land. One of her daughters-in-law, Orpah, moved back with her mother and eventually remarried, but Ruth chose to stay with Naomi.

Ruth made a covenant with Naomi. She entered into a greater level of relationship with Naomi and promised not to leave her side. Eventually, Ruth served Naomi as a daughter would, showed respect as a daughter should, and obeyed her mother-in-law. Naomi considered this a good deed and Ruth received favor and reward and was able to ultimately remarry.

The relationship between mothers and daughters can be considered complex and very diverse. Some mothers and daughters are very close and are like best friends. Others do not get along very well. Some avoid conflict and stay away from anything that might lead to a conflict or misunderstanding. Others talk through every issue, even if it is uncomfortable for them. As is in any type of relationship, no matter how perfect, there are ups and down. It takes more than just avoiding confrontation to make the relationship better and to build a bond like the one we find in the story of Naomi and Ruth.

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #39**  
**Communication is key in any relationship.**

Communication is key in any relationship. Each party should open to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings. A relationship does not work when we wait for others to bring to life the ideas we already have in our heads. It is easy to recognize when a relationship is strained or there are challenges. Each party should be willing to take the lead and open the lines of

communication. State your desires, express your needs and help the other person every opportunity you get, even if your efforts are not reciprocated.

Ruth had to go through Naomi to get to her next husband. Ruth received instruction from Naomi on how to get Boaz's attention and how to win his heart. Ruth's worth was based on Boaz's observation of her relationship with her mother-in-law. It was based on her commitment. But Ruth had to produce something for him to see.

What was Boaz really looking for? Boaz was looking for a producer. He was looking for a woman that had the capacity to produce. Ruth was a producer. She was a creator. She worked for what she needed. That was the attraction. Ruth's capacity to produce made her attractive. That is what makes a good relationship/partnership work, the ability to produce. It was not her beauty that attracted him. It was what he saw in her commitment. It was her work.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #40**

##### **Successful partnerships require action from all parties.**

Ruth was a woman of action. She did not just sit on the sidelines and wait. She took action. Successful partnerships require action from all parties. Whether in marriage, business, ministry or the marketplace, no one accidents their way into success by sitting idly by doing nothing. Upon the advice of her mother-in-law, in the evening, Ruth would lay at Boaz' feet. Her actions were unheard of, but she did it anyway. She did things that were uncommon for a woman to do. Ruth and Naomi's partnership was so strong that Ruth's commitment to Naomi caused Boaz to recognize the uniqueness of her commitment.

Covenant and commitment work hand-in-hand. Covenant and commitment multiply partnership. When a relationship is functioning well on all levels, like Ruth and Naomi, there is a great chance that someone will take notice of the relationship and a new relationship may result. Let's look at referrals. How does a business get referrals? A customer refers a friend, family or colleague because of their experience.

When you think about the father/son relationship, a father wants his son to be committed. Ruth's commitment to Naomi surpassed that of a son. That was the type of relationship and commitment that Boaz desired.

### **What is Broken Can be Fixed**

*"Don't call me Naomi" she told them. "Call me Mara because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me." (Ruth 1:20-21)*

Naomi told Ruth, *"Don't call me Naomi, call me Mara, because I am bitter."* (Ruth 1:20) Ruth was mad. She was angry. She felt life had dealt her a bad hand. She was going back home with nothing - no husband, no children, nothing. She was really ready to give up, so she requested her daughters to leave. She said, *"You can go back. I have nothing. I can't give you anymore sons that you can marry."* But Ruth saw something in the relationship that Orpah did not see. Ruth saw possibility. Ruth knew that all Naomi had was her husband and her two sons. Her family had escaped a famine and went to live in a new land. There was no money. They were broke. How do you continue a relationship that is broke?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #41**

**Cherish your relationships, show love and make every effort to  
keep the channels of communication open.**

Be open to make some changes within yourself, how you think, the things you think about, your attitude and your actions. Sometimes you are the problem in the relationship and you may not realize it. But when you decide to do something about it and change how you think about the other person or how you relate to them, you will realize from where the problem stems, and if it requires that you change some things, you can take action.

Again, communication is the key to the success of any relationship. In any relationship, if you do not talk, share thoughts, ideas, and experiences, or even if you used to, but suddenly

stopped, the relationship will be strained and you will gradually become strangers that only hold themselves together by the convenience of the relationship. Ruth was loyal to her mother-in-law. It is rare that daughters-in-law will choose to take care of their mothers-in-law when the marriage ends, which is why Naomi and Ruth's story is very unique. Cherish your relationships, show love and make every effort to keep the channels of communication open. Relationships often grow around adversity and tragedy.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE SOUND OF PARTNERSHIP

*"Harpists spend 90 percent of their lives tuning their harps and 10 percent playing out of tune." ~Igor Stravinsky*

#### **Finding the Right Sound**

Picture an image of someone playing the guitar, striking the strings and nodding their head to the great music in play. Notice the melody that flows from the strumming of the instrument and the great feeling it produces for the people in the room. When great music is played, it is easier for those listening to connect and begin to sing along. No matter the age, everyone can appreciate the sound. Youth are inspired to come from the back of the room and passionately spin a rap verse; others in the room join their voices in harmony and sing from the depths of their souls, with great intensity. The sound is heard by everyone in the room all because of the instrument. The melodious sound produces an atmosphere of oneness and community that causes everyone to participate in unison.

Now, picture the image of people waiting in a room for an opera or musical concert to begin. Imagine the musician walking up to the stage, smiling and addressing the audience with unspoken words and unclear gestures, but still communicating a message that builds the people's anticipation. He then picks up his instrument to play. The first note sends a distorted sound reverberating throughout the room that startles the audience. The audience, still in great anticipation, ignores the distortion and anxiously awaits the music to fill the room. But that never happens. The musician continues playing in an off key and the crowd, who obviously expected something much better, becomes restless. The atmosphere of anticipation slowly drifts away. The harmony in the room is gone.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #42**

### **Relationship thrive when the parties are in tune with life.**

Looking at these two examples, we can see the difference in the way the stories play out. When an instrument is in tune, it can stand on its own and do its part, providing good music and joy in the hearts of the listeners. However, when the instrument is out of tune, when the sound is distorted or out of key, it causes a cacophony and it changes the mood of the room. The difference between example one and example two is the tuning of the instrument. The first musician took time to prepare and properly tune his instrument to perfection, while the other musician, who was probably an amateur, did not know how to tune his instrument correctly to provide great sound for the people.

In example one, the sound in the room created a synergy and energy in the room that caused the people to be on one accord. The instrument was in tune, the musician was in tune, the people in the room were in tune, and as a result, everyone was able to partner in the atmosphere of great music. All players in the room, including the instruments, had to be on one accord for partnership, (or community in this case) a working together, to occur. Symphony... Harmony... Melody... three words that distinctly describe the sound of partnership.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #43**

### **Symphony... Harmony... Melody...**

#### **three words that distinctly describe the sound of partnership.**

Some instruments have to be tuned up in order to get the right sound. In the same way, people have to be in tune with life in order to create the right sound of partnership and attract those who are on the same frequency, who have like minds, who have similar goals and dreams. You must be in tune with life and in tune with what God has for you. Relationships thrive when the parties are in tune with life. There are times in our lives when we feel out of tune. But just

like a piano that has be tuned up for all keys to be in sync, we must be open to getting in tune with life.

Many people go through life out of sync. They are out of tune and on the wrong frequency. They have difficulty communicating with and relating to people. They prefer isolation instead of community. The way you do one thing is normally the way you do everything in life. When you are out of tune with life, your sound is off in many areas of your life. There is noise and distortion coming from your "instrument." Your relationships are out of tune. Your finances are out of tune. Your communication is out of tune. Your emotions are out of tune.

### **In Tune with Life**

*"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course." (Psalm 82:5)*

As human beings, we are inconsistent in some areas of our lives, and as such, we should recognize when things are going out of course and bring ourselves back in tune, bring ourselves back to the reality of what is, what is not, what should be and what should not be. As you read further, you will understand why some things in your life are not going exactly in the right course; why you may not have sound judgment concerning some things in your life; why you may not have sound financial power; why you may be losing out on some relationships because of the noise in your actions; why you have the wrong answers to life's questions and keep scoring points on the wrong board. You have to be in tune. You have to be in relationship.

I have a few questions for you...

*What are you in tune with?*

*Who are you allowing yourself to become?*

*What are you allowing to come your way?*

*What are you open to?*

We all have phases in our lives where we feel disconnected from everything and everyone, and as such we begin to emotionally respond to everything. Your eyes are taken off the big picture and suddenly, the only thing that matters is what is going on in your own little world. You become irritable, irritated and tired of many things all at once. You become frustrated and suddenly find yourself in a downward spiral. Sometimes people try to manage their feelings, but they still face life with a nonchalant attitude.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #44**

##### **You cannot face life when you are out of tune.**

You cannot face life when you are out of tune and expect positive results in your emotions, your academics, your work, your career, your business, your finances and your relationships. Everything comes to a halt when you are out of tune. What does it mean to be out of tune with life? I mean, we're no musical instruments, right?

*"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" (Matthew 6:25-27)*

When a person is disorganized and unclear about where they are going in life, unsure of what they want to do, skeptical about career choices and leery about relationships on various levels, they tend to worry. We are human beings and things happen. Have you ever entered into a phase of life where everything that could go wrong did go wrong? You may have tried



everything within your power to rectify the problems, but did it seem as though things got worse?

Life is not always easy. It is not easy to dream and bring those dreams into fruition; it is not easy caring for family and making sure they are taken care of; it is not easy trying to keep up with friends and being there for people as much as you can, and trying to maintain a balance through it all. There is always the possibility of being out of tune and becoming frustrated. Financial pressures are also a challenge for many people. You have some people at the top of the totem pole, while others at the bottom of the pyramid, struggling every day trying to make ends meet.

I don't care what you're going through. I don't care what is happening around you. The Bible says, "*...and after you have done everything, to stand, stand firm then*" (Ephesians 6:13). Many people give up too soon and as a result, they miss the blessing that God hides in the storm. Whatever the situation, we can still live comfortable, happy and fulfilled when we are in tune with life.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #45**

**You cannot face life when you are out of tune.**

Being in tune with life is key. Think of your life as the guitar and all the things you engage in on a daily basis (work, school, career, relationships, marriage, church, et cetera) as the strings, and life, being the player, always strumming you with challenges and different situations. Are you producing a melodious sound? Are you really satisfied with the sound your life is producing? Are you managing difficult situations or are you allowing difficult situations to manage you?

**In Tune with What God Has for You**

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)*

God's plans for your life is for good and not evil. The best way to experience happiness and peace is by tuning into what God has planned for your life. You have to function where you belong. Some of us already know this and the problem lies where we either don't know how to tune in to this plan and start getting the correct frequency to channel our lives. We really want to get in touch with what God wants for us but we realize that we just do our own thing and fall back in the same place we started. First you cannot connect with God's plan for your life, notice how I say you cannot, if you don't first connect yourself to God. It's impossible to know what God has in store for you and wants you to do when you don't even have anything to do with him.

God's plan for your life is part of the big picture of reaching out to people in your faith and sharing the love that you've received. But it also has something to do with what God has deposited inside of you, the gifts you have and how well you use them, the ideas you have and how you go about developing them. God does not come down to call you into whatever career path you will eventually follow, but He shows you the way from the inception that leads to it.

You have to be connected to God, if you want to connect to the blessings and gifts he has for you. You have to be connected to Him, if you want to know what you should be doing at certain points in your life. He has to be the source of your life for you to actually tune into what He has in store for you. If God is your source, then you will be able to tune in and partner with the plan He has for your life.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE POWER OF AGREEMENT

*"Individual commitment to a group effort -  
that is what makes a team work,  
a company work, a society work, a civilization work."  
~Vince Lombardi*

#### **Is Your Word in the Matter?**

Miriam-Webster Dictionary defines "commitment" as *"an act of committing to a charge or trust."* Commitment is very important. Commitment is not just for you, it is for someone else. Commitment benefits both parties, because there is a coming together, an agreement to do something together that will benefit the whole.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #46**

#### **Commitment is what holds partnerships together.**

Commitment is what holds partnerships together. It requires your word and your action to be in the matter. Commitment affects the whole of a thing and not just one individual part. For example, I am committing to own additional properties by the end of the year. It is good to set a goal and to have the goal in the forefront of your mind, but without a plan of action and a commitment to the details of bringing the plan to full fruition, it will remain an unrealized goal.

How many properties are you looking to purchase? I would like to purchase at least two properties, one for myself and one for income. Then I have to check the progress of my commitment. Did you go to the realtor? Did you see any houses that you want? The commitment must be kept alive. If you do not speak it and keep it in action, the commitment will die and you will forget about the goal and move on to the next thing.

I remember when my husband made a commitment to work on ending racism by 2025. He had to keep the commitment in conversation. He had to keep it in action. When he is out, he talks about it. The more you talk about your commitment, the more you are going to be held responsible for your word, and others will join you to make sure that the commitment is upheld.

### **Declare It!**

If I am declaring something, it is an act of speech that this is what I am going to do. When you declare something, you create something that was not there before. If you want to see your declarations manifest, you must declare them continually, not just one time. The Bible says, "*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*" (Romans 10:17) It is not that faith comes when it is heard one time, but it is through continual hearing that faith shows up, and when faith comes, manifestation occurs.

For example, I am a prophetess. I am telling the world this is who I am. Not only am I a prophetess, I am going to speak forth the word of the Lord and it shall be a word that will change lives and create prosperity. I am speaking it. I have made that declaration that that is who I am and this is what is going to take place. But if I only stand among a specific group and not keep that word in action in the world, then I am not being held responsible for my declaration.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #47**

#### **When God declares a thing, it is so.**

If God says it, so be it. When God declares a thing, it is so. When God said, "*Let there be,*" what He declared came into existence. But God did not do it by Himself. God said, "*Let us make...*" It was a group effort. A lot of people try to be the superhero. They want to be Superman by themselves. But Superman gets hurt. Superman does not have friends. Why? Because he keeps his true identity a secret. Now, let's look at the villain, Lex Luthor. He

declared to the world, "I want to rule this whole earth, and not only this earth, but I want to rule the whole universe." His declaration was clear.

We do not know Superman's declaration. Superman never showed up declaring. He was in and out. No one knows who he is, no one knows what he likes, what he doesn't like. He just shows up and disappears. The question comes to mind, how committed is he? He is only person. One person cannot save the whole world. You need other people. Lex Luthor, although his intentions were evil, brought together villains from across the world. He understood that in order to get his mission accomplished he needed the partnerships of other people. He needed others who were committed to his vision. You need other people to keep your vision alive. It is a group effort.

You have to declare your commitment. Ask yourself, "How committed am I?" How committed are you to the purpose that God has called you? How committed are you to your destiny? But not only that, how committed are you to yourself and your own well-being. Before you can declare your commitment to anyone or any other vision, you have to first commit to yourself and to your own wellbeing. You have to commit to loving yourself and who God created you to be. Ask yourself, "Do I really love me?" Perhaps you may need to commit to focusing on yourself for the year.

There was a season in my life where I thought I loved myself. But I really didn't love myself, because I did not show Debra how much she is really loved. Other people said, "Pastor, we love you. We care for you." But people can only say so much. It did not register until I said, "I love Debra. I love who I am. I love the person that God created me to be." The Holy Ghost said, "Debra, how can you be effective in your calling and purpose when you do not love yourself? You don't love the way you look? You don't love this about yourself, you don't love that about yourself." A picture was being painted of who I was becoming.

I had to repent and apologize. I had to make a commitment to declare my love for who God is in me. Today, I love everything about me, everything that I am and everything that I'm not. Charity starts at home. Loving myself was paramount to my commitment to be a contribution in the world. It had to start with me first, then it could spread to my family, then to my church, and then to the world. I had to take the necessary steps.

When God created the heavens and the earth, He first started with a declaration. God said and it was so. God took the initial step. Many people are afraid to commit to anything. Fear will keep you bound. Fear will immobilize you. Fear will keep you in isolation. Ultimately, fear will kill you. Fear seeks to destroy you. God says, "*The thief cometh to kill, steal and destroy.*" (John 10:10) The enemy comes to take what is yours. He comes to take your life. He comes to destroy you, as if you never existed.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #48**

##### **Declarations are made from the background of our concerns.**

Declarations are made from the background of our concerns. I was talking to a gentleman about his family situation and he told me that his brother was not doing well. His condition was going downhill. I asked, "What are you committed to?" He began to say, "I love God. I believe I am committed to God." He said, "I love my child." But then he said, "I love taking drugs." I asked, "Is that your core value. Is that what your committed to, taking drugs, something that is going to kill you, something that is not benefitting you." He replied, "Yes."

It was sad. This gentleman began to look at the bigger picture and realized that he really did not love himself. Not only did he not love himself, he was unaware of the potential that God placed within him. He was living a life beneath what God wanted for him, but he only saw that little piece of himself - "*I love God, I love myself and I love taking drugs.*" His response was an eyeopener. This man was called to be prophet. He is able to prophesy and give the word of the

Lord. Not only that, his word is accurate. Yet, he did not know that he had already overcome his addiction. He became settled with his current state.

We as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ have to begin to awaken to righteousness and right standing with God. We as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ must begin to declare the word of the Lord. We as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ have to stand strong and begin to let the world know, let our families know, let our neighbors know, let our communities know that we have the voice of God within us and this is who we are. We will not accept anything less.

### **Stand in Your Commitment**

*"The only limit to your impact is your imagination and commitment."* ~Anthony Robbins

Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise"* (John 5:19). Jesus was always motivated to emulate His Father. The question is, how are we living our lives? *"Well, I'm just upset and I'm just going to tell you the way it is."* No. You have been brought with a price. You no longer belong to yourself. I am reminded of the scripture that says, *"For in him we live, and move, and have our being"* (Acts 17:28) You do not belong to yourself. You do not have a right to give anybody a piece of your mind. You can give them the word of the Lord, but not a piece of your mind. Your mind belongs to God.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #49**

#### **Commitment has everything to do with purpose.**

Commitment has nothing to do with your feelings, emotions or circumstances. Commitment has everything to do with purpose. It always brings you back to what you originally said. Your feelings have nothing to do with it. People marry today and divorce

tomorrow. Where is the commitment? My husband and I have been married for over 37 years. Some of those years, neither of us felt like we are married. Sometimes we say, *"Let's not say anything to each other until..."* But just because that is our feeling at the moment, it does not mean that we are not committed to the marriage. The question is not how do you feel? The question is, are you committed?

Whether in business relationships, marital relationships, or team relationships, feelings can lie to you. Sometimes you have to turn on the flashlight.

*"Well, we had an argument, and I didn't care too much for what he said. I'm upset and I have to prove a point. I was right; he was wrong. So, I'm standing my ground and moving to the side until he realizes and recognizes that I was right."*

Sometimes that will never happen, especially if you have two strong-willed people. Sometimes you have to get to the point where it does not matter who is right and who is wrong, because you are committed to each other and that commitment will sustain your relationship. Commitment is the glue in relationships. Your word is out there.

In the presence of many people who witnessed our wedding, my husband and I made a vow. How can we dissolve our commitment, based on our personal feelings when we made a vow? Many of the people who attended our wedding have passed away. How can we go back and retract what we said? They were witnesses to the commitment, to the vows and to the promise that was made. Commitment creates a bond that cannot be broken. However, the commitment must be in action and in conversation between the parties. If there is no communication or sharing, if there is no conversation, the relationship will be at risk. In his book, *10 Commandments of the Language of Commitment*, Archbishop Jordan says, *"In order to understand the importance of commitment, you must count the costs. Commitment can be generated by identifying what is at stake for you and for others."*



## **What is At Stake?**

*"Be that person who keeps their word, who honors their commitment even when it isn't convenient." ~Lucy McDonald*

The first of every new year, people make all kinds commitments and promises to get fit, to start a business, write a book, go to school, accept their calling, get married. But many times, they fail to keep those commitments. Sometimes we fail to keep the commitment because of inconvenience. Sometimes it is because it does not fit into our schedule. Sometimes it is because of life changes. But whatever the reason is, the power of commitment is what sustains you.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #50**

#### **The power of commitment sustains you.**

Honoring your word even when it does not feel good or when other people are against you, makes you an individual that stands out. You become uncommon. The common person changes his/her mind. Someone may say, *"I have a right to change my mind. I am a woman. It is my prerogative to change my mind."* But when you keep your word and honor your commitment, you are saying to the world, I am a person that can be trusted. How committed are you to your word? Your commitment is very important in fulfilling the promises that you made, whether in business or personal relationships. Your commitment speaks louder than your words. What you are really saying is, *"I said it and now I am going to put my actions behind it."*

Proverbs 16:3 says, *"Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established."* We are to commit not only our works unto the Lord, but one translation says, we are literally rolling all of our burdens upon the Him. You take yourself out of the picture and cast your burdens and cares upon the Lord, because He cares for you. Not only does God care for

you, but He is stronger than you. It is important to learn how to commit your works, commit your ways, commit your all in all to the Lord, because God cares for you. You have to constantly keep in mind what is at stake.

In the New Testament it says, "*Cast your cares upon the Lord because he cares for you.*" (1 Peter 5:7) When we willingly give our burdens, concerns and worries over to the Lord, it relinquishes us to do what we need to do. Many of us give God something and then we feel as though God is not working fast enough and we want to take it back.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #51**

#### **Father knows best.**

The angel of the Lord came to Sarah and Abraham and told them that they were going to have a son. Sarah thought about her situation and said, "*This cannot be. I am over 90 years-old. I am beyond childbearing years.*" She looked at her husband and said, "*He is old. There is no seed. There is no more life in him. We are just looking for the grave.*" But when you believe the word of the Lord, you relinquish your right to try to make things work. You have to commit your will to the Lord, because God is the one that is going to take care of it and perform it.

Psalm 37:5 says, "*Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*" The Message Bible reads, "*Pile your troubles on GOD's shoulders— he'll carry your load, he'll help you out. He'll never let good people topple into ruin.*" If you want to experience success in life, you have to relinquish your right to carry the load. We were not created to carry the burdens of life. We were not created fix it or to work it out. It is our divine right as children of the Most High God to give it to the Father, because Father knows best.

Father knows how to handle what we cannot handle. You may have received some bad news, but give it to the Lord, because if you give it to Him, God is going to take care of it. In the end, you will experience the fullness of joy, because you committed it to God. If you give

something to Father, Father is going to see to it that it is taken care of, and at the end of the day, you will rejoice. *"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."* (Psalm 30:5)

## **You Can Recommit**

Psalm 55:22 says, *"Cast your burden on the LORD [release it] and He will sustain and uphold you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken (slip, fall, fail)."* (Amplified Version) When you give your burdens, your cares, your worries to the Lord, He will not allow you to slip, fall or fail. He will not allow you to be put to shame. He will not allow you to fall, unable to get back up. He will sustain you.

Whatever you are dealing with, I challenge you to give it to the Lord. Don't try to go back, dig it back up and take it back. Commit to give it to the Lord and leave it there. God is more than able to take care of your every need. The lawyer cannot take care of it. The judge cannot take of it. Only God Himself has the ability to take care of that which concerns you. He is not going to allow you to fall. He is not going to allow you to slip. He is not even going to allow you to fail. Even when it seems as though you are failing, you will not fail in the end. What is at stake? The race is not given to the swift nor to the strong, but to those that endure to the end when you give your burdens, cares and worries to the Lord.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #52**

#### **Commitment builds character.**

I want to encourage you to recommit your ways to the Father. Recommit your life to the Lord. You might have fallen short in times past, but as long as there is life and breath in your body, it is never too late. You can recommit your way. You can give your way back to the Lord.

## RECOMMITMENT TO THE LORD... Repeat...

*"Lord, I am recommitting myself to you.  
What I said I was going to do in times past and didn't do,  
I am asking you to forgive me and I want to recommit.  
I want to rededicate myself back to you so that my ways  
will be blessed and you will show me the way that I am supposed to go."*

Commitment is defined as, *"The act of committing; the state of being committed; the act of committing and pledging or engaging oneself; a pledge."* It is a promise. It is an obligation, an engagement, an involvement. It also invokes a strong sense of intention and focus when you commit yourself to the Lord, when you commit yourself to do something that you said you were going to do. Also, it means, "a promise to do or give something; a willingness to give your time and energy; to do something that you believe in."

The Urban Dictionary says, "Commitment is what transforms the promise into reality." Hebrews 11:1, says, "Now faith is..." 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, *"We walk by faith and not by sight"* Your words speak boldly of your intentions, and your actions speak louder than your words. Commitment is about making time when there is no time, coming through time after time after time, year after year after year. Commitment builds character.

When we make a commitment, we are transforming that promise, that word that just went out of our mouth into reality. In other words, we are calling those things that be not as though they already are. When my husband and I got married, we told each other of our commitment during the wedding ceremony, in front of a crowd of witnesses. When we made our commitment, it wasn't done in secret. A commitment that is done in secret is not a real commitment. It has to be spoken. Other people have to hear it. I am reminded of the scripture that says, *"Where two or three are gathered in his name, God is in the midst"* (Matthew 18:20).

When a commitment is made, it is not just you by yourself, but you are making it to someone or to something that is bigger or greater than yourself.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #53**

**A commitment that is done in secret is not a real commitment.**

You have to have a stick-to-it-ness. You cannot walk away from a commitment. People do walk away, but that does not make the commitment null and void. Commitment is not connected to your emotions. When it gets heavy, relinquish the right to carry the load and be committed so that you can walk in the reality of what it is you committed to, because there is a vision and the vision will speak. It will either speak of your defeat or it will speak of your victory.

Show me a man or a woman committed to a purpose, to a cause or to an individual and I will show you success. Commitment builds character. Commitment is not gauged by your feelings. That is not a true measure of commitment. Commitment goes beyond what you are feeling. Commitment goes beyond what is happening in your present. Commitment goes beyond time and season. Commitment is what makes you successful in life and keeps you on track.

## CHAPTER 9

### DON'T GET WEARY... KEEP IT MOVING!

*"Life is like riding a bicycle.  
To keep your balance, you must keep moving."  
~Albert Einstein*

#### Don't Get Weary

Commitment starts from within, but manifests outwardly. When my husband asked me for my hand in marriage, I said yes; but then we began to share the news with my parents and family and his parents and family, and it kept expanding up to the wedding day. We had 300-400 people at the wedding, and it was there, in front of all of the witnesses that we made our declaration. We made a declaration that we were committed to each other.

If my husband and I ever wanted to go back on that commitment, it would be a challenge, because we would have to go back to everyone who was present at the wedding and renounce what we said to each other. Remember, commitment is what transforms the promise into reality. It was a promise, and now we are living and breathing the reality. If we had not committed ourselves to each other, Zoe Ministries would not have been established. It was work and faith in action that brought about the reality. If you are struggling with commitment, keep your word or go back and try to renew that word. *"I know I said this, but this is my new agreement. This is my new promise."*

God is a God of action. There is always movement when you connect with God. When you make a declaration to commit to something or someone, then you are declaring it, and as you declare it, it shall be. Sometimes when people make commitments and promises, they get weary in their well doing, but the Bible clearly lets us know, *"Be not weary in well doing, because if you refuse to faint, you shall reap"* (Galatians 6:9). If you stand and endure to the end, you are going to reap the harvest.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #54**

### **The test is preparation for the next level.**

You may have the fire and you may be excited, but there is always a test before the blessing. The test comes to ask, how bad do you want it? Are you committed to what you have promised, because the test is going to come and it is going to try you? But I declare if the test comes and it tries you and you stand, you will come out as pure gold. You will reap the harvest. The test must come for the promotion and the blessing to emerge. It is preparation for the next level. In this life we are always growing, moving and manifesting. It is up to you whether you will pass the test.

### **Playground of the Gods**

We came to earth to showcase God. We came to earth to "be" gods. The earth is the playground of the gods. In Genesis, God said and it was so. Therefore, we too, being made in the likeness and the image of God, have a right to say and it shall be so. The Bible says, *"One day with the Lord is as thousand years and a thousand years is as a day"* (2 Peter 3:8). When you enter into the realm of Spirit, time ceases. A lot of times, because we are in this earth realm, we get stuck in the confines of time. You hear, *"I am committed to this and I am excited."* Three months go by, *"I don't see anything happening. I have so many other things I have to do. I am going to quit."* We have to move beyond that limiting conversation.

*"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."* (Habakkuk 2:3)

The vision will speak and not lie. Delay does not mean denial. If God said it, it is settled. We often get upset about time, but being concerned about Man's time can cause you to miss your blessing. Like the illustration with Abraham and Sarah, when Sarah considered her

own body, the fact that she was old and beyond childbearing years, she laughed. But God said that she was going to have a child. You cannot consider. When you consider, you can cancel out what God has for you.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #55**

#### **Do not consider.**

When you begin to consider, you walk in the flesh and fulfill the lust of the flesh. But if you move from that realm of time and consideration, if you say, *"Lord, I don't understand it, but I am going to do it anyway; it doesn't matter how long it takes, I am committed,"* then time ceases. You stop looking at a timetable. You no longer look at it and say, *"Well, it hasn't happened in a month, it hasn't happened in two months, it hasn't happened in six months."* Though it tarry, wait on it, because it shall come to pass.

You have to learn how to play on this playground called earth. You have to stay excited. Many times, David had to encourage himself in the Lord. When you are committed to a cause or to a person or to a team, sometimes you will have to encourage yourself. Sometimes you will have to make yourself happy. Sometimes you will have to create your own atmosphere for the promise to come to pass. But your commitment says, *"I am in it until the very end."*

Even God created his own atmosphere for things to come to pass. Genesis 1:1 says, *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."* In one translation, it says, *"In the beginning, the Spirit of God began to hover over land, and as he began to hover he began to create."* Sometimes you have to remove yourself from what is and begin to see through the eyes of the Spirit. Allow Spirit to move and motivate you. Refuse to allow time to be the motivating factor. We have to be like Simeon, he did not give up, because God made him a promise that he was going to see the son of God before he closed his eyes in death. Simeon was old. He was serving in the house of the Lord. He could not die because of his commitment and because of a promise of the Lord. (Luke 2)



## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #56**

### **Your imagination is God in action.**

You have to be steadfast and focused on what you said you would do and refuse to allow time and people to stop you or get in your way. Job had the perfect life, but one day his life began to fall apart, so much so that his wife said, *"Why don't you just curse God and die? It's not working. You did something to anger your God."* His friends came to him and said, *"Job, you did something wrong. You have sinned. What have you done for God to treat you this way?"* But Job was so committed to his walk and his relationship with God that he did not allow his wife, his family, his friends, circumstances, or anything else get in the way of his commitment and his love for God. Job began to pray for his friends, and the Bible says that God turned the captivity of Job and he was blessed with double what he had before. You cannot allow people, places or things to dampen your commitment or stop the word of the Lord from being made manifest in your life.

What makes God, God, is His word. How strong is your word? How powerful is your word? Anthony Robbins says, *"The only limit to your impact is your imagination and commitment."* Your imagination is God in action. You have to stay focused on the promise of God, and you have to be confident that what God said will manifest.

### **Are you a Stakeholder?**

The value of anything depends on your perception and the meaning you assign to it. When someone says, *"I made a commitment to do this, but no one is helping me,"* what meaning do you give that statement? *"I made this commitment, but right now I can't see my way."* What meaning are you giving to it? God said he would be to us what we would have him to be. Your perception and the meaning that ascribe to these types of statements cause your action. According to your faith, so shall it be. It is important that we recognize and always be mindful

of what is at stake. The "at-stake-ness" of your commitment must be declared for it to come into existence.

I am a stakeholder in marriage. I am a stakeholder in living right. I am a stakeholder in being prosperous. This is the God that I serve. He is more than able. This is the God that I serve. He is my Jehovah-Jireh, the God that is more than enough. I am a stakeholder in my faith, because I want to show my children that the God that their parents serve is still the God that is more than able to keep and sustain them. You have to define and declare what is at stake for you. Who are the stakeholders that you are holding in your space that are committed to your vision?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #57**

#### **Commitment is a partnership.**

Commitment is not something that you can do alone. Commitment is a partnership. It is you and someone else. You cannot be committed by yourself, because commitment must be uttered, it must be heard and it must be seen. You have to walk it out. You have to see it being done. When you are committed to leading others, you are held accountable to your word. When God speaks, He speaks so that His word will go forth and accomplish whatever it was sent out to accomplish. His word will never return to him void (Isaiah 55:11).

God was so committed creation that He began to involve others in the process. Then after He created each thing, He looked at it and said it was good. Then He went on to the next thing. Many people keep going and fail to observe and reassess what they have done. They fail to measure the progress. If you want to achieve success, you have to measure and assess. In any sport, the game is always being measured. You know the numbers. You know what is happening during the game. You know what is not happening. You know what should happen. Everything gets measured.

Your commitment is always going to be seen in your action, in your attitude and in your walk. Let's commit to doing whatever we said we were going to do. Connect with a prayer partner or an accountability partner that you can talk to at least once a week or once a month, because no man is an island. You did not come here by yourself. You had a mother, a father others that aided in your birth. We need each other. Commit to your greatness. Be a stakeholder in your own greatness. If God said it, so be it. If God said it, it is already settled. Just move forward in it.

I love reading the story of King Arthur and Merlin. Merlin was one of the wizards. The reason Merlin was so powerful and like a seer to King Arthur and his knights was because he learned to live his life backwards. He did not live from beginning to end. He lived his life from the end to the beginning. We already know we are more than conquerors. We already know that in the end we win. So, why are we living a life of struggle, hardship and complaint, when we can live a powerful life? You have to choose to live your life from the end to the beginning. The Bible tells us that God is the Alpha and the Omega. He said the first shall be last and the last shall be first.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #58**

#### **Commit to being a stakeholder in your own greatness.**

Commit to living your life big every day. Declare it to be so. The choice is yours. God said, *"I set before you this day life and death,"* and he gives us a hint, *"choose life so you and your children will live"* (Deuteronomy 30:19). The choice is yours. Let us declare and commit and come together. Let us become stakeholders in our own greatness with great tenacity, with great strength, with great vigor so that we can become movers and shakers in the kingdom of God.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE**

*"The God who existed before any religion counts on you to make the oneness of the human family known and celebrated." ~Desmond Tutu*

#### **Marriage and Covenant**

*"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." (Mark 10:7-9)*

Marriage is sacred. I look at marriage as a triangle, God (who is at the point), husband and wife. The Bible says, *"In all thy ways acknowledge him and he will direct thy path."* (Proverbs 3:6) In any marriage, the husband and wife will always need that third party, which is God, to bring balance and stability and to ensure that the reason for the partnership is kept on the forefront of their minds. Why did we enter into this covenant? We know this is the will of God. We love each other and we have work to do.

The marriage covenant is sacred and has to be demonstrated every day. Sometimes one party may wake up in the morning and feel like they are not married. However, the fact that you do not feel married means nothing. The covenant of marriage must be demonstrated in deed and action. Just saying the words, "I love you," is not enough. Your actions dictate who you are and what you are. The Bible says in James 2:14, *"Faith without works is dead."*

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #59**

**Successful partnerships master the art of agreeing to disagree.**

Marriage is a full body sport. It is spiritual, emotional and psychological. The covenant of marriage encompasses every aspect of your life. It can be physical at times, it is very emotional, filled with ups and downs, and it sometimes plays with your mind. However, it

allows you to become fit in those areas. In order for the partnership to be successful, each area must be exercised and strengthened to full capacity.

Patience must be present at all times. In some marriages, the first time there is a disagreement or conflict or hurt feelings, one of the parties says they are leaving the marriage. This is the same in all relationships, whether in marriage, business or ministry. However, each party must have the patience to work through their differences without feeling the need to end the relationship. Successful partnerships master the art of agreeing to disagree.

The question is, how do you stay in a covenant relationship or partnership when it appears from the outside to be breaking down? The Bible says, "...*having done all to stand, stand therefore*" (Ephesians 6:13). After you have done all to stand, stand. It all goes back to commitment. What was in your contract? What was the agreement? What did you commit to do? In some marriages, the parties write their own vows. The question is, what did you vow to do?

Some men say, "*I will stay with you as long as we do not have children.*" Once children are introduced into the picture, they use that as their excuse to get out of the contract, because they did not opt in for that. What did you agree to? Some couples marry just so that one can get approved for their Green Card. Once the Green Card is approved the marriage ends. The Green Card was the agreement. That was the purpose of the marriage. What is your agreement?

When my husband and I got married, we knew we were both called to the prophetic ministry. We wanted to globalize the prophetic. It is not about how we feel. It is about purpose. The only thing that matters or is important to us is globalizing the prophetic. In between we had some other extras, children, house, cars, travel, et cetera. But the purpose of our union, why were we joined together, was to globalize the prophetic. We both understood our agreement. We both understood the purpose of our partnership.

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #60**

**One plus one equals success.**

Jesus said, "*For this cause was I born*" (John 18:37). What was the cause? What was the purpose? Jesus' purpose was to testify to the truth of God. Once you know the cause and purpose of the relationship, you will not abuse it. When you do not know the cause and the purpose, abuse is inevitable. For example, when a woman gives birth to a baby, the baby has to be nurtured and cared for. If not, the baby will die. She could not leave the child with a gorilla to raise it and care for it, because a gorilla does not know how to take care of a human baby. The gorilla does not know the purpose of a human child.

How do you stay in a relationship and keep your focus on purpose? My husband and I love each other, but there are some days we do not feel like we love each other. In every marriage, at times, both the husband and wife show signs of being upset, angry and frustrated, and there are misunderstandings. But the question is, how do you stay connected? Never allow the misunderstandings to rule the relationship and overshadow its purpose.

After we look through all the clutter, we ask ourselves, do we still love each other? Do we still want to be together? Do we still feel as though we have been called to do this work? Is this work over yet? What else can I do? How did this go into left field? How can I bring it back into center field so that we can see clearer? Why did we get together in the beginning? There was a call. There was a need. Is that fulfilled yet? No. Getting back to purpose is the key to any successful relationship. Why? Because one plus one equals success.

### **In Business**

The same principle applies in a business relationships? What was the agreement? For example, you and your partner decide to start a water business. What is your agreement? We want to make our first million. After we make our first \$10 million, then we can divide the company 50/50. If you have not fulfilled the agreement, then you cannot break the agreement. You should stay in the relationship until the agreement is fulfilled. What takes covenant and relationship outside of the contract?

- **Selfishness.**
- **Inauthenticity.**
- **Lack of integrity.**

- **Inflexibility.**

Lack of integrity means there is no workability. You may see a beautiful chair and acknowledge the beauty and the originality of its craftsmanship. In its original state, the chair is doing what it was created to do. It is fulfilling the purpose for which it was created and designed. However, if that same chair was damaged and only had three legs, it would be out of integrity. The chair would have no workability. It is not able to hold anyone. When there is no workability, there is no integrity.

If I do my part and you do your part, then everything will work together. If neither party is doing their part, there is no workability. The agreement is null and void. Nothing will get accomplished within the context of the relationship. Certain duties and responsibilities will continue to fall through the cracks and remain undone. Where there is workability, things flow and function.

## **The Role of Power in Relationships**

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #61**

#### **Power is a basic component of any relationship.**

I wanted to take a moment to address an issue that often comes up in partnerships, when the parties are in conflict and trying to assert their needs. When someone wants to influence another person, they attempt to exert some level of power over that individual. In this context, power does not necessarily mean something ominous or threatening. There are many different meanings and possible sources of power. Passion can be a source of power. The righteousness of a cause can be a source of power. Confidence is power. When a couple is mired in conflict or when they are desperately trying to get their way or prove the other person is wrong, it often comes down to a power struggle.

Power is a basic component of any relationship. Think about the relationships in your life. Who has the power in the parent-child relationship? On the job when you interact with your boss, who has the power? Who has the power in the teacher/student relationship? Love relationships do not escape this dynamic. Husbands and wives can say they are equal, but to do so requires a mindful awareness of the role of power in their relationship.

If we are not mindful of the role of power in relationships, we will miss an opportunity to have an honest discussion about the dynamics of relationship. It is easy to say, "everything is fine and dandy;" "love conquers all," and any of the other superficial clichés that we have heard concerning relationships. But the truth is, if one partner is denying something from the other in a relationship and ignoring the power struggle beneath the surface, the problem will only snowball, and the parties will find themselves so resentful that breaking up would seem to be the only viable option.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #62**

#### **Unacknowledged power destroys relationships.**

If people want to be transparent and honest in their relationships, whether marriage, business or ministry, they should be able to have a frank discussion about the role that power plays in the relationship. Unacknowledged power destroys relationships. What role does gender, age, socioeconomic status, financial status and social resources play in determining power? Does the older partner feel that he can control the younger partner because he has more experience? Does the partner who moved across the country to be with his lover feel trapped and powerless because he has no social outlet?

Most times, couples in crises usually have not had an honest and frank discussion about power in the relationship. Only by identifying the role of power and putting it on the table can couples do something about changing their behaviors and the overall dynamic of the relationship. Often this is very difficult, because power is covert by design. In other words, at least one of the



partners is vested in pretending that power does not exist, because he or she does not want to relinquish it.

If couples can work together to shine a light on their power dynamics, they can start to build a collaborative approach of eliminating problem behaviors and redefining their relationships. When two people collaborate in this fashion, it builds the bonds of intimacy. Covert power builds resentment, which is basically, covert anger. Failure to have honest discussions about the power dynamics within the relationship, will result in resentment, which will eventually undermine and destroy the relationship. Some couples may find this threatening and may choose to continue to hold on to the sinking ship. Others who find the courage to have this discussion, often find that bringing power dynamics to the surface is the key to repairing their relationship and moving past resentment.

# CHAPTER 11

## THE FIRST LADY SYNDROME

*"Young women must be ready and willing to work with all their heart, might, mind, and strength' in establishing His kingdom on earth. Their part will be accomplished in the quiet ways of the Spirit as well as in more prominent ways. The great things that happen, such as standing as a witness of God, receiving temple blessings, teaching truth, eternal marriage to a worthy priesthood holder, and raising a righteous family, may require many small faithful moments—often without fanfare." ~Neill F. Marriott*

### The Leading Lady

*"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. (Proverbs 31:10-12)*

When you think of the first lady, the image that often surrounds her is someone who has to be the "best of the best." Whether it is the FLOTUS (the first lady of the United States) or the first lady of the church, women who find themselves in the role of the first lady tend to develop what I call the "first lady syndrome." Most women who are thrust into the first lady position are there because they are married to men who hold the senior leadership position in an organization, church, business or government.

The first lady in any organization is, first and foremost, a leader in her own right, with her own set of duties and responsibilities. She often leads from the background, covering matters as they are assigned, putting out fires as they arise, handling the financial matters, comforting those who need comforting, praying for those in need, and keeping the machine in good, working condition. Although many first ladies operate with great commitment, integrity, and excellence, and oftentimes, they are not publicly rewarded for their efforts and accomplishments, they do not

have to prove their worth. Their work speaks for itself. Their value speaks for itself. God did not call the first lady to be the best of the best. God has called her to do her part.

It is imperative that the first lady understand the difference between doing her part and being the best of the best. Sometimes trying to be the best of the best can wear a person out. It causes undo stress, tension and anxiety. It often causes hurt feelings and misunderstandings. It causes burnout, fatigue and disenfranchisement. It has destroyed marriages, partnerships and vital relationships, because she was trying to be the best of the best when God has called her to "do her part."

The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 9:11, *"The race is not given to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."* The race is given to those who endure to the very end. The first lady has the tenacity, the commitment, the fortitude, and the wherewithal to endure and to last until the very end. The question is, what does that look like as a pastor's wife or the wife of one in a senior leadership position? How do you find the right balance between living a happy, fulfilled and successful life and taking on such an awesome responsibility?

Should the wife be referred to as the first lady? Should she be seen by the other women in the congregation as the first lady? Should she neglect God's calling on her life if it is outside of her husband's ministry or can she manage both and still be actively involved? Is she expected to put an end to her own career if it becomes too demanding? What is the first lady syndrome and how does it affect the church today?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #63**

#### **The first lady is a key individual in every group.**

The first lady is a key individual in every group. She is looked up to by many as the model for excellence and her life is often replicated by other women within the organization. She is a leader in her own right and has the qualities that leaders are required to possess. She is

confident. Her words are respected within the group and outside of the group. She is seen as the "first" and she represents other women in her conduct and behavior.

In many church settings, the pastor's wife is oftentimes referred to as the "first lady." She is the wife of the senior pastor or the set man of the house. In most cases, she is expected to showcase the right model for women, to reach out to them and show them the right way to do things. Her relationship with her husband in public is noticed, her wardrobe, attire and style are scrutinized and often mimicked by other women within and outside of the organization. Her words carry weight and are scrutinized, and her demeanor and character are under the microscope. She is a mentor and role model for many. She is the epitome of a great leader.

I am the wife of an archbishop. At the penning of this book, my husband, Archbishop E. Bernard Jordan, and I have been married for over 37 years. We were young when we started dating. We both loved ministry, loved the prophetic, loved God with our whole heart, and knew at a very young age that we were purposed by God to be a team, a partnership, husband and wife. We were both called to the prophetic and to be servants of the Lord. Through the years, we have gone from visiting the sick and shut-in together as teenagers, to getting married and serving in church, to my husband becoming a leader on the staff of a church, to forming and pastoring our own church, to my husband being elevated to the office of bishop, to forming a School of Prophets and establishing a prophetic company, and then ultimately, my husband being elevated to Archbishop.

As a child growing up in the church, I hated the title, "first lady." I despised it with a passion. When my husband started our ministry, I stood up in church before the congregation and said, *"I am not the first lady; I am the only lady."* There is a difference. But if you are the only, that is it. If you ask any member of my church if Pastor Debra is the first lady, they will say, *"No, Pastor Debra is the only lady,"* just setting the record straight and letting the church know that there will not be another. Those that come to the church, if they are thinking, wondering or wanting, the facts have already been stated, I am the only.

I have learned along this journey that "First Lady" is not the title that I want to carry, nor is it the title that I want others to reference me. The First Lady title implies that there is a second lady, a third lady, a fourth lady, and so on. I prefer the title of "Leading Lady," because leading lady speaks to my ontology as a leader. My very being is a leader. A leader does not have to fight to BE the best, a leader just IS. The Leading Lady is always leading. When the pastor's wife changes her hairstyle, seems like the other women in the church change their style, as well. When the pastor's wife wears a particular style of clothing, it seems like the other women in the church begin to follow suit. You are leading. For the sake of this chapter, I will continue to use the title "first lady" just as a reference, since this is the most widely used title in the Christian Church.

### **The Leadership of the Leading Lady**

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #64**

#### **Leadership is an active way of living right.**

Leadership has many definitions. It can mean different things to different people and is seen differently when examined in different scenarios and settings. I choose to define leadership as, first, an opportunity to serve. Contrary to popular belief, leadership is not about being the person at the top or even out front. Leadership is not about telling others what to do. True leadership means being at the bottom first and bringing everybody else up to the level they should be. It means being the first to arrive at a meeting, even if that means ignoring personal interests. It means being the first person to start the work before inviting everybody else on board.

Leadership is an active way of living right, doing the right things at the right time, learning to become better and being an example for others to follow. Great leaders are those who

look out for everybody else and make sure to protect the interests of others, as well as tell them the truth at any given time without filters.

There are many upsets in the Church today around leadership in general and around the leadership of the first lady. There are questions concerning the boundaries that are set for a pastor's wife. How far can she go in her role of support and assistance to her husband in his God-given ministry? There are also questions of whether she should be seen doing anything at all, as some believe that women should not serve in leadership in the church or perform any significant duties. Many believe that the first lady's place in the church is to dress beautiful, organize the women's ministry, prepare and entertain the guests and smile. Still there are others who believe that the Bible does not clearly outline any role for women in the church, other than supporting and assisting the pastor.

This is a very patriarchal society and women over the years have had to push through some barriers and break down some doors to serve in leadership positions within the church, especially when it comes to pastoring and preaching. There was a longstanding belief in the church that women should not hold significant positions of leadership in the church. As a woman, there is no other time in history that I would rather live in than the time that I am living in right now. These are very exciting times. Doors of opportunity are opening for women, not just in the church world, but in business, government and the marketplace. This is God's doing.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #65**

**Once a woman finds her purpose, she can soar to heights untold.**

God is bringing women to the forefront and opening a space for women to exercise their full leadership potential. As a woman, the Leading Lady, a pastor of my church, I find it very exciting. Once a woman finds her purpose, she can soar to heights untold. Many women are frustrated, aggravated, upset and angry, mad at the world and mad at men in general. But once a woman finds her purpose, once she knows who she is in God, that makes all the difference.

*"God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns." (Psalm 46:5)*

Do I have struggles? Do I have challenges? Yes, I do. But I understand that on this journey, challenges and trials are going to come, storms are going to rage, but they cannot stop me. Life's difficulties are not going to get in my way, because I understand who I am, I understand my purpose, and because I am a woman, I am going to press forward even more. The world may say you cannot do something or accomplish a particular goal because you are a woman, because you are a mother, because you are a grandmother, but that is not the truth of you. If God can use someone like me, I know God can use anyone. You just have to be willing and ready.

## **The Husband/Wife Team**

*"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.'" (Genesis 2:18)*

Today, women have assumed the roles of pastor, bishop and other significant leadership roles in the church. Twenty years ago, that was taboo. It was unheard of. The Bible says in Proverbs 18:22, *"He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD."* My husband is the Archbishop and overseer of our church. But when my husband met me, I was already acquainted with God, the calling of God on my life and I loved ministering to God's people. I came to the Lord when I was 12 years-old. My husband was 15 years-old when he came to know the Lord. So, there was always a call of God on my life.

My husband and I got married very young. Whatever assignment my husband was given, we worked on and completed it together as a team. God does not just call the man to do the work or just the woman to do the work, but God is a family God. God calls families together. He calls the husband and the wife together to accomplish a work. From the time we started our ministry, in 1983, I was always the assistant pastor. I didn't just carry the title of pastor. I have always functioned in the role of pastor, even before my title. There are many women in the church whose husbands are pastors or bishops or overseers and they are doing the work. They are the backbone of the ministry. They do the work of a pastor. They may not have the title, but that does not negate their work.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #66**

**The title is not as important as the work.**

The title is not as important as the work. A pastor is a shepherd. Pastors nurture, lead, and care for the flock. When my children were young, I pastored my children. I took care of them, nurtured them, instilled good morals in them and taught them the right things to do. If you



are a mother, you are a pastor. You may not be a pastor in the way that the world looks at the pastor of a church, but mothers pastor their children and nurture and protect the gift of God that is within them. God has instilled within you a gift, the privilege and opportunity to rear and raise His children. When I became a mother, I became a pastor.

As a team, the husband and wife work together. They work as a partnership. The leading lady can be effective in the home, as well as in the church. But she has to understand her purpose. As I said earlier, God is a family God. I'll never forget, years ago I read an article. I often ask other pastors' wives and women in ministry, what does it profit a man or a woman to gain this whole world and lose their family? Family is very important. Many people look at Japan as a nation and wonder why they are so blessed. The family operates as a team. They live together, they build businesses together. Family is very important.

Just because the parents have a church or a ministry or they are functioning in some area of ministry, that does not negate their responsibility to their family. The wife is glue that holds the family together. God is concerned about family. Today, as adults, my children work very closely with me in the ministry. God is a family God. And a lot of times, because of craziness, because of ignorance, because of not knowing and a myriad of other reasons, many church leaders become so anointed with the power of God that they sometimes forget God's hierarchical structure - God first, then family.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #67**

**Whatever season of life that you are in, learn to savor that moment.**

Sometimes within the husband/wife partnership, the wife will feel the call to ministry and feel the urge to go out and do the work of the Lord. She may feel the pull of ministry and the weight of the responsibility to raise her family. The Bible says in Romans 11:20, "*... for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*" If the gift is within you to teach, preach, prophesy, pastor or other, it is there. God is not going to take the gift away from you. Nothing in life just

happens by chance. There is always a reason and there is always a purpose. Whatever season of life that you are in, learn to savor that moment. Learn to occupy that space. The fullness of your gift will be used in the season that God ordains.

I have five children. I look at my life and I say, time went by so fast. When I was 12 years-old, I knew I had the call of God on my life. The hunger and the desire was there to serve God's people. I gave my life to God at 12 years-old. Then marriage came and we started having children. The ministry was still there, and I still kept doing what I was doing, but I did not do it as much as I did before we got married and started our family. If the gift is within you, it is going to manifest. Your family responsibility will be whatever you name it. I made the choice to look at my family not as a burden, not as a hindrance, but as a blessing from God. I saw my husband as a gift from God, my children were gifts from God, and I embraced that season of life that God established for me.

Ministry will always be there. If there is someone to whom God needs you to minister, if there is someone that you need to pray for or someone whose life you need to touch, it will happen with or without the children. God will see to it that the gift that is within you and His purpose for your life will come to pass. If you are a mother and you are called to ministry, you should make it a priority to minister God's word and life to your children, minister love to your husband and be the helpmate that God created you to be for your family.

Many women get so caught up in being in the front and in the spotlight, that they find it difficult to lead from behind. They find it a challenge to be in the background and be the helpmate. They do not find it rewarding holding up the ministry and not being seen. But it is not about being seen. It is all about giving God the glory, loving the Lord and letting God's will be done in whatever way He chooses to express Himself.

In the early '80's, the Lord told me to minister to my husband and my family. My ministry was my family. Being that support to my husband and allowing him to be the head was

what God commissioned me to do in that season. So, if it meant for me to go in the background, it did not matter, because God's gift that He placed on the inside of me was still in operation. Being called does not mean that you have to be in the forefront 24/7. It means that you are a leader who knows you are and understands that you have already been called by God and can function in whatever area God chooses.

*"The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel." (Judges 5:7)*

I patterned my life after Deborah, the prophetess, in scripture. Prophetess Deborah said, *"Then I, Deborah, arose, a mother in Israel."* Deborah was married. She was a judge, so she was working. She was doing something other than up front ministry. But when the need arose, she was ready, she was prepared, and she went forth with Barak to win the battle for Israel. The gift within her and the ministry was always there. She was a judge and she sat under the palm tree ministering, but she also took care of home. Women have to be effective in every area of their lives. It is not enough for you to go out and win the world for Jesus, but you have to win the world, as well as your family, because, again, God is a family God.

### **Partnership: A Coming Together**

When we look at leadership in the church or the position of the pastor's wife, we see that it is not really about positioning or putting one person above the other to lead and model what they should look like or how they should live their lives. It is a group of people that are directed and led by one person who goes the extra mile to learn and become the model that the people can look up to. In this case, there is no place for second or third or even fourth.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #68**

**There is a return to the male and female partnership.**

Thirty years ago, the women were in the background and the male preachers were preaching the word of God and degrading the women, *"You're going to hell if you wear lipstick; you're going to hell if you do this and that."* But the hour and season and day that we are in, God is raising up the man and the woman to come together and work. In the beginning, God called Adam and Eve. He called the family. Today, there is a return to the family. There is a return to the male and female partnership. Only then can you see the whole picture. Only then will there be a completing of the wife as woman, a completing of the husband as man. It is a coming together of the male and the female, the man and the woman.

This is the season of coming together, where God is raising up women who know who they are, who lead with great power and who are powerful enough to lead from behind or in the front. How can two walk together unless they agree? We must walk together, not to compete nor to complain, but to complete each other. Competing against each other is not going to bring success in the relationship, partnership, marriage or ministry. We must complete each other in every aspect of the word. My husband and I complete each other.

### **Servanthood and Submission**

In a marriage partnership, learning to submit to the one that you have been called to serve is vital. In the church world, many people look at the word, "submission" as an ugly word. There often is a negative connotation surrounding submission and marriage. Submission relieves me of the burden of, did I obey or disobey? I am looking up to my leader, to the one that God has called me to serve, the one to whom God has called me to submit.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #69**

**God makes servants and then the servants become leaders.**

Let's look at the relationship between David and Saul. God called David to serve Saul. Saul was evil and wicked, but that did not give David license to say, *"I don't have to listen to*

*him.*" Even the times that Saul was throwing the spear at David, David had to duck. Servanthood is the key to everything in life. God does not make leaders. He makes servants and then the servants become leaders. When Jesus was on earth, He came not as the king, not as the leader, but He came as a servant. For Christians who desire to be successful in life, whether you are a woman or a man, the key to your prosperity, the key to your blessing, the key to your success and ministry is servanthood, learning to serve who you have been called to serve.

I knew when I married my husband, that God called me to be his helpmate and to assist him in his assignment from God. It may have looked as if I had to put my ministry and what I wanted to do on the back burner, but I did it in faith, knowing that this was the purpose of our partnership, this was the will of God. I did not worry about what I wanted to do, because in the fullness of time, what is in you, is going to express itself outwardly. Either we believe that God is in control of our lives or we don't. That was my conclusion. My prayer was, *"Lord, you are in control of my life. You called this marriage into existence. If you did it, then I must submit to your will."*

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #70**

**Once you understand your why, the how will automatically show up in your life.**

The peace came, knowing that I was in the will of God. When you understand that you are in the will of God concerning your life and that this is the season that you were destined to walk into, then a sense of contentment, rest and trust becomes present in your world. If it is your season, then walk in that season knowing that God is going to meet you, knowing that God is saying, yes all the way, knowing that you are not out of God's will, but you are in His will in every aspect of your life, whether it is the family, the children, the husband, the job, whatever it might be. As long as you know that you are doing the will of God, and the purpose of God is being expressed and manifested in your life, that is all that matters. You have to understand your "why" (purpose). Once you understand your why, the how will automatically show up in your life.

People are going to always try to tell you what you should do. *"You're the pastor's wife, you should be doing this; you shouldn't be doing that; you should raise your children;"* and the list goes on. But as long as you understand your purpose and you are clear that this is the will of God for you, then you will not have to be concerned with every opinion, comment or unsolicited advice that comes your way. You may say, *"God called me to serve my husband."* Someone may respond to you and say, *"But you preach better than your husband."* It does not matter. God called me in this season to serve him, to be the helpmate, to be the backbone. The backbone is not visible all of the time, but is very vital and very important. Without the backbone, there would be no support.

I sit in my authority as the woman of God, as the wife of the Archbishop, as the pastor of the church. I sit in my seat with honor and with dignity, and I will not allow anyone to take away that right that God has given to me. The title, "First Lady," sounds nice and sweet, but a lot of things in the church that we have been saying sound nice and sweet. The question is, is it God? When my husband and I married, we married for life. We knew that God called us together to do ministry, because we both understood that we had a purpose. It is all about understanding your purpose and learning how to serve the individual to whom God connects you.

The institution of marriage and the partnership and teamwork around marriage life is wonderful. My husband and I have our ups and downs, but it is all part of life and part of married life. We understand our purpose. He is not going anywhere, and I am not going anywhere. We are here for life. Our covenant is for life. We have an agreement that spans beyond love for each other. Our agreement is based on our love for God and His calling on our lives.

## CHAPTER 12

### LEADING BY EXAMPLE

*"I actually think that the most efficacious way of making a difference is to lead by example, and doing random acts of kindness is setting a very good example of how to behave in the world." ~Misha Collins*

#### Leading Effectively

How does the first lady lead effectively? What does it mean to strive to be the best of the best? Is there a "right way" to approach leadership as individuals, as the pastor's wife, the church congregation, business and workforce? Is the first lady required to strive to become the best of the best? Is she expected to stand up to speak on behalf of every woman in the church or is she supposed to just function in whatever responsibility she is given? Should she be content with playing her part as assistant and modeling that to the rest of the church?

#### PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #71

**If you lead effectively, if you lead in excellence,  
if you lead in the face of adversity, your leadership is going to be seen.**

There are a lot of upsets in the church world. Everyone is looking for someone to look up to, to model and to emulate. Women often view the first lady as their hero, someone after whom they can pattern their lives. The Apostle Paul said, *"Follow me as I follow Christ"* (1 Corinthians 11:1), but he never told the people to "be" him. That is the distinction. Many women try to be the first lady. But it is a leading into leadership, a leading into greatness, a leading out of what you are going through into another place where you are getting ready to go. That is the role of the leading lady.

The first lady (or in my case, the leading lady) must lead without fear and sometimes lead in the face of fear. You do not have to be the best of the best. You have to lead. If you lead effectively, if you lead in excellence, if you lead in the face of adversity, your leadership is going to be seen. *"Ye shall know them by their fruits."* (Matthew 7:16)

How does it look leading in an area where I don't know the next step? The leading lady whose ontological makeup is a leader, will take on that challenge. Yes, there is fear. Yes, there is uncertainty. But the leading lady's attitude is, *"I'm going to do it anyway."* Leaders do just that, they lead. Leaders who know God, trust God, and follow His voice are unstoppable. Even in the face of uncertainty and adversity, the true leader leads, because he/she trust God. When God told Abraham to take his only son and sacrifice him, Abraham had to lead in that scenario, trust God and obey. Isaac asked, *"Where are we going?"* Abraham replied, *"We are going to make a sacrifice."* Isaac wanted to know where was the offering? Abraham responded, *"Don't worry about that, God will provide."*

## **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #72**

### **Great leaders trust God.**

Great leaders trust God. They lead in spite of what they feel, in spite of what is around them and what other people are saying. Job lost everything he had, family, livestock, his living, but he kept leading. His wife came to him and said, *"Why don't you curse God and die, because something has happened that has allowed your God to turn his back on you."* Yet he still led in the face of uncertainty and in the face of not knowing what was happening or why it was happening.

### **Striving to be the Best**

We must get to a point in our lives where we do not think beyond what we are called to be and do. Everyone has the mind to be a capable leader and attain excellence, regardless of what



position we find ourselves. As we begin to take on certain responsibilities, we search for an idea that can keep us motivated and confident enough to mount the stand and try to do more than we are expected to do.

Being the wife of a powerful man in leadership automatically situates a pedestal that begs for us to climb it but only exists in our minds. Some people will say things to suggest that you do not deserve to be in that position of power or that you are only in that the position because of the man you married. Many people in the church will criticize the first lady and every move she makes. They will also criticize her if she does not make as many moves as they think she should to be in such a position of power. Oftentimes, this pressure automatically alters her focus from her desire to do something good, relevant and productive, to a desire to do better than you can actually do, to be the best and to prove them wrong.

As individuals who desire to be part of something great, to be instrumental in the process and to produce outstanding results, we often worry when we first start to do things and they do not seem good enough either to us or to those who think and believe we should be doing better. It drives us beyond our comfort zone and puts us under unnecessary and undo pressure to please people and gain their approval. It is very evident in the workplace when you notice someone who is better than you at certain tasks.

It is natural to feel the pressure as the first lady, but it disappears when you put away the first lady syndrome and just look to being a leader, a good leader, an effective leader, the leading lady, one who understands that people will always be people. Human beings have flaws and idiosyncrasies that often infringe upon others, but you do not have to allow them to dictate your actions, moods and responses. Instead, it should help you realize that those whom you lead need to be led and they need a new understanding. It should fuel your passion and desire to teach them how to be great.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #73**

**You do not need to prove that you are better than anyone else.**

As a leader, do not allow the idea that you are who you are now solely because of God, push into isolation and cause you to prove to others that you can be your own leader. You do not need to prove that you are better than anyone else. Although it is true that you are the first lady because your husband is the senior pastor, it should not cause you to be in competition or seek to highlight how great you are. Instead, you should love your husband and his assignment and play your role in the growth of the ministry. You are a part of him. The two of you are one, a team, a partnership. God did not call him alone. He called you and him as a team, a partnership.

The first lady syndrome will cause you to strive to be the best of the best. It will pressure you to try to stand out and apart from everyone else. It will cause you to feel alone and oftentimes, lonely. It will give you the urge to feel like you are the voice for something and cause you to take on new responsibilities to prove to the people that you are capable of being the supposed "lady in charge." On the other hand, leadership will breathe into you a thirst for supporting your husband and being there for him. You will learn to model the supportive, powerful, giving, loving wife to every woman in the church and they will gradually begin to learn and accept you. Although acceptance cannot be the focus, do your best and make sure that it is your best.

### **It Takes Two**

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)*

Women who desire to lead in certain areas, often allow themselves to become a dumping ground for other people's opinions. Instead of ignoring the negative, often useless opinions, they

choose to recycle them and then begin to be in competition with the men. Many women do not see a problem with competing with other women because we have been brought up in a society that creates a box for our gender and sets us one against the other. We try to attain power like the men, lead certain groups of people and be respected like the men, be the head and not just support to the men, simply because we want to be respected like men. What men and women fail to realize is that we were not made to climb a ladder and receive recognition based on who gets there first. We do not have to be in competition with each other in order to be awarded the best.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #74**

##### **God did not create us to be in competition with each other.**

God did not create us to be in competition with each other. He created us to be an active part in the earth as a whole and to do our part with excellence, efficiency and integrity, every man and every woman, in every age group. We were not created to compete against each other as individuals. We were created to work together, to assist each other, to depend on each other and to partner together to accomplish great things. No one person can be successful by him/herself. We were created to work together in partnership. Together is always better.

Let us consider life as a wedding celebration, where eventually everyone proceeds to the cutting of a huge, beautiful cake that is divided into small pieces for each person to eat. You do not usually see people searching around for the largest piece of cake so they can eat more than everyone else. Everyone just takes whatever their hands can hold and moves on. Similarly, the world is big and there are plenty of opportunities for everyone. God does not give the big opportunities to men and the small ones to women. This idea comes from society and certain misconceptions that are widespread. Women are not weak, they are not secondary and they are not just the helpers. Neither do they have to prove themselves by striving to be the "best of the best." Each woman was created by God to play her part in the big picture of God's reformation, as well as men.

In the church, the role of the woman is often modeled by the wife of the pastor. She is a leader in her own right, and people look up to her. The pastor's wife is a leading lady and should model the role of playing her part, as opposed to striving to be the best of the best, which only ignites a mindset of competition. Seeking to "outshine" others is futile and hardly ever leads to lasting results. It is an effort that calls for the spotlight, the need to be seen above everybody else, the desire to be called first before the names of others are heard. It is a dangerous journey to embark upon, because it seeks to shut down other people in the process. But how can one survive by himself/herself? Can one really be successful as a one-man wonder?

If you are expending exorbitant levels of energy trying to be successful, trying to be perfect in a not so perfect life, just to be at the top of the ladder, while leaving other people at the bottom by any means necessary, you are destined to fail in life. You may have experienced occasional victories and fleeting wins, but in the big picture you will not be successful, because it takes two to tango.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #75**

**An ideology that builds partnerships and relationships**

**breeds success, peace and stability.**

Efforts to put others down in favor of yourself are contrary to God's original plan for us to be fruitful and multiply. You cannot multiply on your own. Striving to be the best of the best, as opposed to just being excellent, is the wrong mindset to have if you want to be successful. On the other hand, an ideology that builds partnerships and relationships breeds success, peace and stability. It is not one that seeks to achieve something at the detriment or loss of others, but it is one that looks to achieve with others. It is not the concept of you or me, it is the concept of you and me. It is a people-oriented, rather than a self-oriented mindset.

We get to work together in partnership, appreciate and encourage the whole team to excellence, and not pull others down just because we want to sit on the glory throne and get all the attention. When you view yourself as a part of something greater, a solution to a problem that only you can solve, given that you do things with a you and me attitude, you are able to focus on your assignment and embark on your purpose with peace of mind. With a heart that welcomes every person we meet along the way and seeks to learn new things from everybody who is willing to teach, we become better women and men and successful leaders.

*"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

We can all make the world a better place. We can all fix our homes as individuals with different roles, without looking at who will do it better or trying to compete to win. We are not in a battle against ourselves. We were placed in the earth by our Creator to stand together against all odds. The best of the best will never exist. There will always be better. Why be among a body of great people, each with their own individual gifts and talents, yet try to do everything as a solo act? Let us look at ourselves as excellent people who are driving at one goal of excellence in our various stations and put aside the distraction that competition brings.

### **The Detriment of Trying to Outshine Others**

Consider a race where all the runners are running at the same pace and holding steady along the race. It does not matter who is running faster. They are all heading somewhere. Nobody is trying to outshine the other, and nobody is slowing them down either. In this kind of race, it does not matter how long it takes to reach the end. What matters is they are all running and clearing the hurdles together.

Compare this to the conventional race, where every runner is trying to outrun the other and with their overexaggerated winning mind, the more they try, the more stress and energy they have to expend just to beat the other person. They are looking to get the prize alone, staring at the finish line in hopes to reach it first. Each runner trying to beat the other, they exhaust themselves in the process. They wear themselves out and leave the race with a distinction between the best and the others, and will go back to their training grounds and try to work harder to beat the others the next opportunity they get.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #76**

**Partnership is about teamwork, collaboration and working together for the betterment of the whole team.**

This same distinction can also be found in high schools and universities. In high school, where academic excellence is awarded, we see students study not just to be excellent, but to be the best in the class, to be called out on award's day and sweep all the awards for themselves. They strive to be at the top of the class and respected by all their fellow classmates. Although this mindset brings great recognition and self-satisfaction, it hinders the opportunity for joint study groups, sharing knowledge, teaching a fellow student when they don't understand something and having the "winning together" mindset.

In universities, there are no awards to distinguish between the best students. There are grades that determine excellence and everyone gets a fair shot at attaining them. In university, we find people studying together, sharing knowledge in tutoring groups and talking about winning together. There is less competition and more group-oriented thinking.

Trying to be the best of the best can wear you out. It makes you work with the wrong kind of motivation, beating others to attain glory. It does not leave room to recognize and acknowledge the strong points of others. There is great pride involved in trying to win based on other people losing. It causes distrust, envy, strife, and isolation. It causes one to lose their

compassion and sensitivity towards their fellow man. The mindset of being the best of the best destroys partnerships and relationships faster than anything else. Many people do not realize how much damage it causes when other people also want to be heard within a group and a person pushes themselves in the forefront, dominates the conversation and wants to be the only voice that is heard.

In partnerships, the players hope more than anything to play their part and do it with excellence. They all have a gift or skill or knowledge that is necessary in making the outcome complete. Partnership is not a place for self-inflation or trying to be the person with the best idea, condemning the contributions of others in the process, or trying to speak for everyone, showing that you know better. Partnership is about teamwork, collaboration and working together for the betterment of the whole team. Partnerships are destroyed and visions halted in the process when the players are not welcoming and open-minded, when they build a gate at the receiving end of their brain and try to be noticed, be the best of the best, speak before other people, give more ideas, edit everybody's ideas and present it again to be better than what they had initially thought.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #77**

**A relationship of two selfless people will leave more room for love to thrive and bring the best of the relationship.**

Nobody wants to be in a relationship with someone who wants to be in the spotlight all of the time. Of course, you do not want to be the sidelined person, the one whose voice is silenced by another who intends to speak their own thoughts and yours for you. Love is not self-absorbed or self-centered. It is selfless and looks to hear from the other person. A relationship of two selfless people will leave more room for love to thrive and bring the best of the relationship. A relationship or marriage where one partner is trying to achieve more than the other, trying to do more than the other, trying to make more money just to appear better than the other will not last. It will cause separation and eventually lead to strife.

## No Comparison

*"I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn't always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn't always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skillful are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don't always lead successful lives." (Ecclesiastes 9:11)*

Remember, the race is not given to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. It is not a matter of who is the best or who is the strongest, fastest, smartest or richest. Excellence is not always identified by the strongest, fastest, smartest or richest. In some cases, the most skilled person might not be the best person for the job or position. It is not always a game of trying to be the one who knows or has more than anybody else. You cannot sweep a floor with a broom that has only one bristle. Even if it were possible, the one bristle alone would become weak and eventually break. However, when there are many broom bristles that form a bunch, you can sweep for days and the broom will remain intact. Even though excellence and skill are important, it makes a lot more sense when it is seen as part of a collective team, rather than one individual being greater than the others.

When we begin to see things in this light it becomes a lot easier to endure challenges and hardships. Even when it looks like others are moving faster, advancing faster, getting to the finished line faster, but you are moving steady toward accomplishing a particular task, it does not mean you are slow. We all have different roles, no matter how similar they may seem, and we all have different ways to play these roles. Do not judge yourself based on other people's speed or strength or accomplishments, but on how well you are doing what you have been called to do.

The wife of a pastor brings the responsibility of leadership. In most cases, she is responsible for leading the women in the congregation in various areas of their lives. She is often the role model of the ideal wife. Her lifestyle and the knowledge she shares teaches other



married women about submission to their husbands and the role of wife in the home, as women in the church and also the in the society. It is a very awesome responsibility that, if not taken with the right mind, can as well cause some heavy damage.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #78**

**A wife is one who helps and supports her husband in every area of life.**

A wife is one who helps and supports her husband in every area of life. She does not seek to outshine him, nor does she shrink to the point of obscurity. The wife of a pastor has the extra added responsibility of supporting her husband in the ministry. She encourages him when he feels frustrated and supports him in making good decisions. She is not the senior pastor, she is his wife and should support him rather than try to outshine him. The ability to help and assist are necessary qualities of a pastor's wife and not be seen as irrelevant or menial duties for the side person. Her role is vital and should be seen as that.

The first lady (or leading lady as I like to call it), has a major part to play in the growth of the church and the ministry. The pastor's wife who does not assist her husband, but always tries to upstage him or refuses to be a part of the building of the ministry, will eventually be a burden to him and will cause more harm than good. Outside of the ministry, she is his wife and is expected to love him at all times. She plays a very important role and should embrace it and do it well.

The role of a pastor can be very challenging. At times, it is very exciting and there is joy in the air. Sometimes it is frustrating and challenging. It is a role that can be very rewarding, yet tiring and lonely at the same time. And just as it is important and necessary for all men to have a wife to help and assist, it is twice as important for a pastor to have a supportive, loving, powerful helpmate to help, assist and always give support in his calling and in the further improvement of the ministry.

A pastor's wife does not have to give up her own calling to serve her husband and the ministry. There is no comparison. Both of their callings are equally important, although she must be involved in various ways. She is a vital part of his team, a significant part of the partnership, and she is there to love him, help correct his errors, feel his disappointment just as much as he does, and be there to encourage him during difficult times.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #79**

#### **A good wife is her husband's pride.**

A pastor's wife cannot force her way into any responsibility. The Bible does not delineate a set of responsibilities relegated to the pastor's wife. This cannot be overemphasized. But at the same time, she does have the responsibility to carry out the tasks that she is given and suggest ways to tackle problems and challenges. She is not a backseat person or sideline help. Her level of involvement in the church is determined by her husband. She cannot be found sitting in the midst of gossip, even if she is intending to know what people say about her or her husband. She does not necessarily have to be the leader of the women's ministry in the church, or add to the workforce of the church, or be an usher, or play an instrument, or do one particular thing in the church. Though she can, she is not obligated to do so.

She is a leader as much as her husband and should at all times display her leadership characteristics, whether silently or openly. People tend to look out for someone they can look up to, follow and emulate. She is a bonafide leader. People look up to her, husbands point to her, when she changes her hairstyle it begins to look like a uniform, as other women in the congregation begin to adopt her style. When she teaches, the women are very eager to learn and follow. She is often very respected and she is always leading. She is always expected to be at the forefront in everything.

Her attitudes are emulated by other women in the congregation. What she says about her husband sometimes determines how other women will treat their husbands. If she submits to her

husband's authority and speaks well of him, other women begin to emulate that and learn to see good in their husbands. If she buys a gift for her husband, for example, and presents it in public, other women begin to shower their husbands with gifts. Meanwhile, if she is a rude wife and avoids any involvement in the church and the ministry, she not only sends a bad message to the other women, but she also creates a bad impression for herself and even her husband. A good wife is her husband's pride. If she understands that it is not about her but about God, and the lives of so many people are determined by her character, what she chooses to wear, what she chooses to talk about and her views and opinions, she will remain grounded.

She must learn to choose her words wisely so as not to corrupt the other women in the church. She is a mentor, listening to others and giving them tangible advice based the word of God and always encouraging them. As a leader, she is expected to model biblical standards in her conduct. *"Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other"* (Romans 12:10). *Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves* (Philippians 2:3).

## CHAPTER 13

### THE PRINCIPLES OF LEADING BY EXAMPLE

*"A leader is one who knows the way,  
goes the way, and shows the way." ~ John C. Maxwell*

Leadership often begins with a passion to lead, a passion for the people and for their growth. The leading lady must be a leader and she must have a passion for the congregation, a passion for leading them and a genuine interest in their wellbeing. She is not a leader just to occupy the position or just because her husband is the pastor. She is expected to grow in her passion for the church and in her knowledge of leadership.

- 1) **Make the congregation feel safe around you.** Leadership is not leadership if it is by force. Many people make the mistake of trying to seem hard so that the people following can fearfully follow them wherever they are led. But that is not effective leadership. People want to be led and loved by their leaders. A pastor's wife must learn to love and make people feel safe around her. Every form of arrogance must be gradually extinguished. She must learn to understand the people and their differences and react to them accordingly. She cannot hold grudges. She cannot hate people who speak ill of her, her husband or the ministry. She has to be able to overcome criticism and accept correction when necessary.
  
- 2) **Embrace servant leadership.** Great leaders are those who embrace the concept of serving their team. They do not ask people to do something they would not do themselves. They humble themselves to listen to their followers and help them in whatever way possible. They refuse to sit in one place and order people around. They join in the work and encourage others to do more as they lead by example. They do not waste time trying to prove themselves to be the ones in charge.

- 3) **Lead by example.** As a leader, people watch your every move, oftentimes, not because they want to find flaws or mistakes, but to see if you actually do what you say. When you lead by example, people will willingly follow you. If not, people may still follow the leading lady, just because they respect her position as the wife of the pastor. But it is always better to walk the walk that you teach.
- 4) **Be confident.** It can be a challenge to stand before people and teach or mentor them, especially if it is your first time. However, confidence is necessary in your speech and in your actions. People want to be sure you know what you are doing and what better way to show that you really know than presenting yourself with confidence. Confidence is essential for effective leadership.
- 5) **Encourage creativity.** Ideas can come from anyone at any time and should be encouraged. The leader must be openminded. They should be able to stimulate creativity among the congregation and promote and reward good creative ideas. They should be open to innovation and learning new ways of doing things.
- 6) **Do not criticize or complain. Give compliments and encouragement.** Negative criticism and complaints without the right intent often demoralize people and hinder them from doing their best. A great leader gives correction in love and should be slow to complain. People are prone to making mistakes and should not be condemned for it. Always show appreciation and acknowledgement when work is done well, and give encouragement to people who need to be encouraged. A great leader should be able to motivate others and encourage them to be their best and to attain their heart's desire.
- 7) **Be honest.** As much as the leader expected to give compliments and encourage people with their words, they must be honest. Do not say things just to get people to work. Be sincere in everything that you say.

- 8) Be a good listener.** The ability to listen is a gift and it is vital to the effective leader. Many people forget how to listen to other people. People want to be heard. An effective leader must be ready to listen actively to others, with a sincere heart to hear what they are saying.
- 9) Help others grow.** It is very easy to become self-absorbed and desire to be the only one who knows how to do certain things. Effective leadership requires that you teach others to become better. Help them grow and be the best that God created them to be.

### **Render Fear Useless**

*"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."*

(2 Timothy 1:7)

We are all on a path that has been predestined for us before birth. We grow through life, and in the process, we discover ourselves. Daily we identify new things about us that we never knew existed. We realize new hobbies, meet new people, and discover new desires. But somewhere along the way we meet up with fear. Fear is that distressing emotion that pops up when we feel we are in danger or discover knowledge of an impending evil or pain. Sometimes it is real. We can either see it or feel the effects of our fear, and sometimes it is all in our head. But whatever the case, the feeling of fear brings dreadful thoughts and emotions.

Fear is a useless emotion. Yet it is a feeling that you cannot possibly escape on your life journey as a human, much less as a leader. However, the key is knowing that the spirit of fear does not dwell in you, but power, love and a sound mind to be the leader that God created you to be.

Fear weakens us and can potentially kill some of our dreams and ideas. However, faith is the antidote to fear. You may have an idea, a dream or a vision that you want to begin to work

on, but fear may raise its ugly head and cause you to doubt whether you can really bring it to fruition. As a result, you begin to doubt and eventually give up on such dreams. Hebrews 11:1 says, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* Even when it seems impossible to achieve or it seems like it will not work out, or that you have made a terrible decision, your faith can push you forward. You have to have to believe that things can still work out fine, and even when they don't, you can be sure that there will be more successes in the future.

Leadership requires courage and cannot be approached with fear at the helm. You have to be determined to face your fears and conquer them. You have to believe and move. Instead of focusing on the consequences of wrong actions or bad decisions, allow your faith to move you forward. Rest on Romans 8:28, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* There is no failure in God.

### **Leading in the Face of Fear**

*"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear,  
but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who  
does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."*

~Nelson Mandela

Below is a list of fears that you will face on your leadership journey.

**Fear of making the wrong decisions.** This one cannot be escaped. Many people are now looking up to you to make decisions that will determine not just your own life, but their lives as well. The group will not wait for too long for you to decide. It is not just about you anymore. The task of making decisions is a part of leadership. You will be faced with dilemmas that require urgent decisions and others that you may have time to think through. You will have to decide whether some programs will continue and if some people should remain on the team.

Even as individuals, we still face the fear of making decisions that are crucial for our lives, and we often fear the consequences of making the wrong ones.

**Fear of being criticized.** Being a leader does not overshadow who you are as a person. We all have different ways of doing things. We each have our own values that determine how we lead our lives, which will ultimately influence how you see things as a leader. For example, you might prefer that everyone on the team wear a certain garment, or you may want to erect some ethical codes of conduct to curtail irrelevancies and extravagance among the people in your group, or you might decide to allow everybody to be free to wear what they want, but give them some specific do's and don'ts. But whatever the case may be, you will still be criticized. Be assured everybody will not accept the way you choose to approach certain things and the decisions you choose to make. You may make a decision you believe is right at that point in time and people who do not understand your reasoning will speak against it. As a leader, you will not be able to escape the critics. It comes with the territory of leadership. You cannot be the leader that the people want you to be. You have to be the leader that God has called you to be.

**Fear of being responsible.** As the leader, you are in charge. You are responsible for your decisions and your actions. If you make a decision and the people run with it and it eventually leads to success, you will get a lot of credit and people will gradually begin to trust your decision making. In the say way, if you make decisions or take actions that some people disagree with and the final outcome is not what you planned or envisioned, you will be the brunt of the blame and the people will hold you to it. You will always face this fear every time you have to make a decision. You will eventually have to trust your judgment, get used to taking risks and do what you believe is right.

**Fear of failure.** As a leader, you will face moments of impending failure or what looks like failure on your journey. Depending on how you view failure, the fear of it can determine a lot in your leadership role. Some people walk away once they fail at something, some never try due to the fear of failure, while others see failure as an opportunity to learn and try again to attain a new



level of success. You cannot escape failure and the fear of it, but you can control how the fear of failure affects you. Fear is a common factor in leadership and cannot be avoided, but you cannot allow it to hinder your ability or capacity to lead. With every fear there is a solution, an answer or a strategy to allow you to move forward. It is better to fail forward than to stop. Never allow your fears to lead you. You cannot lead without fear, but you can lead in the face of fear.

## CHAPTER 14

### RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

*"Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships." ~Stephen Covey*

#### **The Myth: Silence is Golden**

*"Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." (Isaiah 1:18)*

When you hear the phrase, "silence is golden," what are your thoughts? When there is disagreement in a relationship, it is often said by one or more parties, *"The best thing to do is to avoid saying anything at all."* Instead of arguing over a particular issue, someone will choose to be silent, rather than speak what is in their heart, usually to avoid confrontation. Their mindset is, *"If I say something, it's going to be the wrong thing."*

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #80**

**Effective communication requires a speaker and a listener.**

Communication is key in successful relationships/partnerships. Even God said in Isaiah 1:18, *"Come let us reason together"* (KJV), or *"argue it out"* (NRSV). A healthy relationship includes some level of reasoning, discussion and even disagreement. When one is silent, he/she tends to keep a conversation going in their head. Generally, one party does not know what the other party is thinking or planning or feeling. Silence or having a conversation in your head does not equate to being in communication. There must be a listener and a speaker for there to be true and effective communication.

"Head conversation" can only be heard by the individual who is in thinking mode. In essence, they have retreated to their own world within their head, choosing to remain in isolation. The silence must be cleared so that communication and open dialogue can occur. However, there must be clear, concise and agreed upon "rules of engagement."

For example, imagine attending a seminar with your spouse. The seminar has over 200 people in attendance. A discussion question is raised by the facilitator and both you and your spouse answer the question. However, you both have differing opinions, which quickly turn into an open disagreement. Each of you are voicing your opinion, but both of you are becoming increasingly frustrated with each other's responses. What do you do?

### **Engaging in an Argument**

Disagreements and misunderstandings are a healthy part of any relationship, whether in business, marriage, ministry or otherwise. However, if you are going to argue, there must be rules that are understood by all parties. There has to be set times to discuss the issues and a safe environment in which to do so. Each party must understand the do's and don'ts. For example...

- 1) We're not going to say anything about the past.
- 2) We're going to just talk about what is happening now.
- 3) We're not going to raise our voices above a certain tone.
- 4) We're not going to intimidate each other with our facial expressions.
- 5) We're not going to cut each other off mid-sentence.

Each party must understand and agree to the rules before engaging in an argument or disagreement. If the rules of engagement are set as parameters within a relationship, then any time disagreements or misunderstandings occur, the parties will always have a blueprint for arguing safely. Silence is golden, to a certain extent, but if silence is the default response when

any disagreement or misunderstanding arises, issues will never be resolved and each party will forever remain with the conversation in their head. Eventually, the relationship will suffer.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #81**

**It is possible to argue constructively and to agree to disagree.**

Sometimes you need an objective third-party, a referee, a moderator, a coach, one who is neutral and can listen to both sides without judgment. In any game, there is a referee who understands the rules of the game. They are deliberately set to ensure that everyone complies with the rules. They recognize violation of the rules - fouls; hitting below the belt; stepping out of bounds; traveling. They also know when to flag penalties and enforce the rules. They keep the game in integrity. It is possible to argue constructively and to agree to disagree. In the long run, both parties come out better and the relationship will remain intact.

People often find themselves disagreeing at work or in whatever group they find themselves. They interject information and evidence they have learned from personal experience, and/or studied or researched and place it on the table before their opposition. They explain their point of view and the other side does the same. Eventually, the one with the most convincing information and evidence wins the argument.

Sometimes nobody wins the argument, and at times, they arrive at differing points and then agree to disagree. Arguments are not always based on what is true and what is not true. Sometimes it is just about who knows the facts best and who can argue their points more effectively. Some people decide to surrender, even though their argument is valid, but then they find themselves in positions where they have to prove what they believe is true and may have to defend their position to help other people decide or just understand. You cannot argue without facts and evidence.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #82**

**Arguments are not fights.**

Arguing is not just what inventors, marketers and debaters do. In every relationship type there are arguments, disagreements, misunderstandings and points of debate on various ideas, issues and viewpoints. It is something that people do on a daily basis. Everyone should develop certain skills and strategies for constructing an argument and arguing constructively. It helps you to develop your critical thinking skills. It helps you to discern whether an argument is necessary or not. Overall, it helps in making life choices and teaches you how to effectively determine the facts and weigh evidence in any given subject.

### **Arguing Constructively**

In order for partnerships to be successful and thrive, there must be parameters and boundaries set for disagreements. There are rules of engaging in disagreements that will allow all parties to express their views, opinions and feelings, without destroying the relationship. There are ways to have a successful argument without both sides getting frustrated and throwing in the towel on the relationship.

- 1) **Don't go in with half-baked ideas.** Make sure you have all of your facts in order and evidence ready to present. Many people go into an argument with just a little knowledge, or just enough to answer a few questions when asked or just enough to respond to their opponent's points, but not enough to present a concise, cohesive argument.
  
- 2) **Choose your arguments wisely.** Don't just argue about anything and everything. You should not allow your ego to jump to the front of the line every time a controversial issue is raised. Sometimes you have to analyze your battles and choose if you want to engage in the argument or not. It is impossible for anyone to know everything there is to know about every subject. There will still be times when you will have to listen and learn. If a topic comes up that you do not have knowledge about or that you know just a little about, don't join in the argument. Sometimes it is okay to just listen.

- 3) **Leave your emotions at home.** As difficult as it may seem, try not to insult the other party or parties in any way. If your argument is well thought out, with relevant facts and information, then you are well prepared to present your side of the story. If insults and innuendos come from the other party, ignore them and remain focused on presenting your side of the argument. Your pride may be bruised, but if you can ignore the insults, then you increase your chances of winning the argument.

You have to constructively engage in an argument. Sometimes you will win, sometimes you will lose. But do not allow a loss to discourage you. Let it fuel your desire to learn new things. You can constructively argue with your partners without causing hurt feelings or destroying the relationship. Arguments are not fights. They are just disagreements, which oftentimes help you to understand each other better.

### **When One Wins We All Win**

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #83**

#### **Failure and success fuel your passion.**

In any argument, both sides can win. You can change your mindset and eventually win whether you are right or wrong. During an argument, facts are revealed, evidence is presented and new perspectives are introduced. You can share your side, but still pay attention and learn in the process. At the end of the day, mutual satisfaction is the ultimate goal. You either win the argument or you gain more knowledge.

In sports, it is win or lose. You do not win from losing, but there is always growth after every game. Sometimes victory isn't good, because when we win, we have a tendency to bask in the glory and forget about everything else. You become so preoccupied with the thought of

being the best that you forget to keep learning and training to get even better. Failure and success fuel your passion.

When one wins on a team, everyone wins. Everyone can walk away satisfied with the result of the argument. Both sides can experience growth after an argument and benefit from increased knowledge and a desire to learn more. At the end of the day, everyone should return to the drawing board and move forward with the vision.

## CHAPTER 15

### WHY PARTNERSHIPS FAIL

*"The best partnerships aren't dependent on a mere common goal  
but on a shared path of equality, desire,  
and no small amount of passion." ~Sarah MacLean*

#### **Failures in Partnership**

We have discussed how partnerships work. We often allow ourselves to make mistakes that we could have avoided, get into deals or partnerships that were not mutually fulfilling, and make promises that we know we cannot keep. We are human beings and we are bound to have failures in our lives at one point or the other. There are no perfect people, and there are no perfect partnerships. People make mistakes. Some people are selfish, some people are not trustworthy, some people are not reliable, some people are deceptive, some people are dishonest and lack integrity, and some people do not have a good work ethic. There are many reasons for failures in partnerships. Below I've listed a few of them for us to discuss.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #84**

##### **Money cannot be the sole reason for entering a partnership.**

Some partnerships fail because the parties fail to adequately define the vision from the outset. From the beginning of the relationship, both sides should have a clear vision of the potential of the partnership/relationship and understand the purpose, why God brought them together. It is even more important when it comes to joining that vision with someone else or bringing other people on the team. Money cannot be the sole reason for entering a partnership. There is always going to be profit if you do what you are doing very well. But money cannot be at the top of the list, nor can it be the only thing on the list.



Whether in business, marriage or ministry, the parties should state their visions, views, beliefs, desires and goals. All parties should understand what they want, what they are pursuing and anything else that is important. Without proper understanding of the vision or purpose in any type of partnership, failure is often waiting at the end of the tunnel. People often enter into partnerships because of money, and they eventually walk out of them when there is an absence of value and the vision is not clearly seen or understood anymore.

Partnerships also fail because the parties fail to develop an effective process or system to make decisions. It is important that the parties outline a set of core values they consider when making decisions. For example, some couples make decisions based on their religion. Some business partners, make decisions based solely on their goals and their goals alone. The fact that these processes are almost never discussed is a very big problem. Some partners will do what they know needs to be done at whatever cost, even if they need to make sacrifices, while others who are less assertive will feel bad because they were not asked to contribute.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #85**

#### **Relationship has to be established.**

As much as partnerships are driven by achieving their set goals and go to great lengths to be successful, internal care is paramount. They should spend some time looking at themselves and tending to their needs, and advising, supporting, encouraging each other. Relationship has to be established. Without relationship, partnerships remain strictly work related, leaving little or no time for honesty and sincerity to grow in pure love. A lack of internal care results in insecurity and mistrust, which eventually causes a party within the relationship to leave when a seemingly better offer crosses their path. For a partnership/relationship to be successful, the parties should develop a sense of loyalty to each other and to the partnership.

#### **Unrealistic Expectation**

Failure in relationships is not always the result of what other people did not do. Sometimes unfulfilled expectations cause failure in partnerships/relationships. People have a tendency to expect other people to do something, and when they, in fact, do not do what is expected and it puts a strain on the relationship. Even when one party does something really well, the other party may not see it, because they are thinking about what they want to see and what they expect them to do. As a result, the other party feels unappreciated. They are left with the option of staying in a partnership that they feel does not appreciate their efforts or leaving the relationship.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #86**

#### **Over expecting anything in relationships often leads to conflict.**

In marriages or courtships or even just dating relationships, people tend to often place high expectations on their partners. We expect them to just do, or see, or understand, or think something without us making any efforts. We want them to be better than the idea we create in our head of a partner. We do not allow them to be free to be themselves, rather we complain our way into ending the relationship. Sometimes they are not the blame, because they tried their best to make it work. Sometimes it is just unrealistic ideas and expectations. Over expecting anything in relationships often leads to conflict.

Let's examine this case study. Jude is a writer and had an idea of creating a writer's group for helping companies with their documentary projects. He contacted a few of his friends and explained the vision. He brought other writers onboard. When they needed photography services to increase their portfolio, he found a photographer and added him to the team. He viewed the photographer's portfolio on the Internet and liked his work at first glance. At the first meeting with the photographer, Jude explained the duties and responsibilities of the position. He further explained that he is expected to translate every writeup into a visual presentation. The photographer expressed that he understood his expectations.

After a few projects, Jude began to expect the photographer to do more than they had originally discussed and agreed upon. He had new ideas for the writeups and he hoped that the photographer would just agree and give his input. Jude started to complain about the work and criticize some of the photographs from previous projects. When asked what the problem was, Jude was unable to answer. It did not look like what he had in his head. The photographer grew tired of hearing Jude complain about his work and he decided to leave. He told the team, and disappointingly, they began their search for another photographer.

A few months later, Jude stumbled upon a picture on the photographer's page that looked exactly like what he envisioned in his mind. As a matter of fact, it looked better than he envisioned. Jude could have just explained what he had in mind to the photographer. He could have spoken to the photographer and they could have worked things out. However, Jude was expecting more, not because the photographer's work was not good enough, but because he the photographer to give his input and ideas. However, Jude did not lay the proper groundwork. He had an idea, but he failed to communicate it in full and open the lines of communication for the photographer to engage in a brainstorming session.

It is possible that the photographer would not have liked the idea. They could have talked about it, brainstormed and came to a mutual agreement that would help the whole team. But that did not happen because Jude refused to communicate. He refused to share his idea in full and hear the photographer's input and feedback. Jude's expectations were unrealistic, because he failed to effectively communicate his desires.

### **What About Plan B?**

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #87**

**In business, always have a Plan B.**

You're in a partnership and things aren't going as planned. What do you do? Reassess what happened. You've heard the sayings, "*Don't put all your eggs in one basket.*" "*Don't put all your hopes in one place.*" Always have a Plan B in place, so that if one deal does not work, you have viable, workable options in the pipeline.

What is a Plan B? A secondary plan that is implemented to protect you when your primary plan fails. Plan B is there for backup and support. It is implement so that you do not lose everything in case of a breakdown. Having a Plan B in your partnership does not necessarily mean that you have a substitute person to do the work if another person's effort does not meet your expectations. It means having an alternative plan in place that can be implemented in the event of an emergency or turn in the workflow. Plan B allows you to work with piece of mind, knowing that if Plan A fails, Plan B is already on deck ready to be put into action. It eliminates worry and stress and decreases the chances of a financial downfall.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #88**

#### **Plan for your successes, but don't forget to also plan for your failures.**

In business, always create a Plan B. Plan for your successes, but don't forget to also plan for your failures. Have your first plan, your first draft, your first idea, but do not leave it at that. Never put all your eggs in one basket. Have a backup plan. ***Warning...*** *This only applies in business partnerships/relationships. Of course, don't have a Plan B for marriage. I wouldn't advise that.*

#### **BE Ready**

Always be in ready mode. 2 Timothy 4:2 says, "*be ready in season and out of season.*" Be ready to embrace new opportunities, be ready to serve when the need arises, be ready to support others when needed. Be ready and alert at all times, eagerly expecting new opportunities to come your way. Stay awake and ready.

In your business, don't sit down when Plan A does not work. You should already have Plan B ready to go, if Plan A fails. When a breakdown comes, do not waste time in regret or in passing blame. Refuse to sit down and do nothing when you are at the crossroads. Do your calculations, create your plan, decide and get moving.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #89**

#### **Rise above the odds and run towards your goals, passions, desires and dreams.**

This is the mindset that we all need to have concerning anything in our lives. Always be ready to move forward. Never give up because of mistakes or hurt feelings. Rise above the odds and run towards your goals, passions, desires and dreams. Being openminded simply means that you have a willingness to think about, consider or receive new ideas or different way of doing something. It means not being rigid with whatever you feel and believe, but learning to accept or even just listen to suggestions and opinions. It means flexibility, not sticking to one way of doing something. You can have a standard for carrying out operations of any kind at work or school, but being openminded means you are open to more than one way of doing things.

The world is constantly changing, welcoming new ideas, new solutions, new innovations and new technologies to employ greater results. However, even though there are now new technologies that help people do things faster, some people still choose to stick to the old way of doing things. They are aware that there are new materials and tools, new technology, new creations, but they refuse to move with the change, even when the rest of the world is moving forward.

Some companies refuse to use social media to market their products online. Some still prefer the antiquated model of going from place to place to do things that can be done in the comfort of their offices or even homes and provide even better results. Some large companies refuse to adapt to the new technology of teleconferencing, which in the long run would

drastically reduce their operating costs by way of travel expenses and travel time, especially in different countries. As you can see, these examples are quite broad. Why wouldn't anyone be openminded and accept new ideas that may be better and more cost effective?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #90**

#### **Be open to try new things and avoid the sinking ship of stereotypes.**

Those who are openminded are willing to accept new views once they are presented with enough facts and evidence. They stand a greater chance of success at everything they do, compared to those who resist change at all levels. An open mind is the first stage of being ready, ready to listen to new ideas, to see new concepts, to learn from them and develop a new mode of operation as immediately as possible. Open your mind to new things and new concepts in your partnerships. Be open to try new things and avoid the sinking ship of stereotypes. Allow the wind of change not only to blow your failures into successes, but also to blow your old ways of doing things into new ones. Stay ready to embrace new ideas and run with them. Refuse to be left behind.

#### **Strategic Planning**

There is always a need for strategic planning. In accepting changes and developing new ways of doing things, you have to consider your environment and create something that fits your business model. Consider the trends that you see around you. Are other businesses moving in a direction that is suitable for your business? If yes, then move in that direction. Assess your strengths and weaknesses. What will it take to develop something that will work for you? Do you have to learn something new or just run with what you know? Have you been following a plan or are you just going wherever the wind takes you?

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #91**

### **Be ready to develop new strategies.**

Your plans must be adaptive enough and able to survive when changes come and conditions that you do not anticipate. Your vision should be big enough to accommodate a secondary plan or idea. If you take the time to develop and execute a significant plan, you stand the chance of gaining a lot more than you expect and envision. It is better to develop something that is concrete and work towards perfecting it, rather than working without plan and going with the wind. When things do not go as planned, do not give up. Be prepared to accept change. Be ready to develop new strategies.

### **Tackling Disappointments**

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #92**

#### **Disappointments are inevitable.**

Disappointments are inevitable. In partnerships and relationships, there will always be disappointments. Even when we trust people to make sound decisions or carry out various tasks and responsibilities, there is always the possibility that someone may not do as they agreed, which will ultimately lead to some form of disappointment. Disappointments are a normal part of life and they are impossible to avoid. However, disappointments and failures should never interfere with your bottom line. They should not cause you to give up on your dreams, ideas or vision. They should fuel your passion and desire to expand your vision.

### **Are You Bitter or Better?**

Dwelling in bitterness often leaves you drowning deeper in bitterness. When trials come, and try to disrupt your relationships and partnerships, don't give in to the pressure. Dust yourself off and continue moving forward. Bitterness keeps you from everything that you can and should be doing. It pulls you into depression and boxes you into idleness and isolation.

Disappointments will come. Maybe you failed to do your due diligence. Maybe you failed to do your research thoroughly. But you have to be determined that whatever the situation, it will not make you bitter. It is only going to make you better. Are you going to be bitter or better? You make the choice.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #93**

#### **Bitterness is detrimental to your financial, emotional and mental health.**

Bitterness is detrimental to your financial, emotional and mental health. It only brings you more sadness, and keeps you locked in a sea of regrets. Being better, on the flip side, is a more workable solution when approaching anything in life. You can get better at writing and send in another article to that magazine that you always wanted to publish your work. You can learn new dance moves and go back to that same dance competition you lost last year. You can regroup, develop something new and begin again. When you fail, it is not for you to give up and say you can't do it anymore. It is a reminder that you can actually do much more. So, don't stop. Don't give up. Don't dwell in bitterness. Get up and do it again, until it finally works.

#### **Shift When Necessary!**

*"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." (Psalm 24:9)*

Things are changing and shifting. You cannot live your life declaring, *"I don't have, another day. I am struggling. I am trying to make it."* Those are the wrong declarations. Notice my declarations. *"I choose to live my life saved. I choose to live my life miraculously. I choose to be the blessing God created me to be."* You never know who will cross your path. Refuse to walk around with your head down. Your head should be up. You have the strength to shift when necessary. The people are looking for you, but your head is down. The new business is



looking for you, but your head is down. New relationships are looking for you, but your head is down. New partnerships are looking for you, but your head is down.

Depression, disappointment and bitterness will cause you to put your head in the ground, like an ostrich. You have to change your posture, change your position and change your perspective. You have to stand boldly in the face of adversity and proclaim, "Look on us! I have what you need! I have the answer!" As you open your mouth in faith, you are going to give them the answer. You are going to give the solution.

#### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #94**

##### **Shift when necessary!**

Allow this to be a year like no other year that you have ever experienced. Allow this year of your life to be your year where you take back what belongs to you. Allow this year to be the greatest year that there ever was for you. You have to shift when necessary. Shift your conversation. Shift your mindset. Shift your perspective. Never be committed to a day. Be committed to a life! A day will come and a day will go, but a life will still remain. I don't want to give you something that will make you feel good for a day or two. I want to give you something that is going to transform your life, so that once you understand it and work it, you can go and transform someone else's life.

Be committed to the cause. Be committed to the workings of God. But that can only happen if you prioritize what needs to be prioritized in your life. Proverbs 16:3 says, "*Commit thy ways unto the Lord.*" Either He is the Lord of all or He is the Lord of none. Proclaim with me, "*Lord, that thing that I don't want to talk about, I am committing to you. That thing that I don't want anyone else to know about, I am giving you that too, because you can handle it. You can fix it. You can make it right. I am committed. I am committed to shifting when necessary.*" My question is, how committed are you? Whose report are you going to believe? The choice is yours.

**PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #95**

**Be committed to the cause.**

# CHAPTER 16

## SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS REQUIRE PASSIONATE LEADERS

*"Leadership is not about a title or a designation.  
It's about impact, influence and inspiration.  
Impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading  
the passion you have for your work, and you have  
to inspire team-mates and customers." ~Robin S. Sharma*

### **The Passion to Lead**

We all have the spirit of leadership inside of us. We are all capable of being at the forefront directing other people to do certain things and achieve certain goals. In our different fields and in different places we find ourselves, we all stand a chance of exhibiting true leadership. However, we are not born into leadership. Our capability in leadership is not ultimately determined by being gifted with certain skills and abilities a leader should possess, because, in that case, leadership would be found in only a small segment of the population. But we all are capable, strong, privileged and human enough to be leaders.

Leadership can be defined to mean a trusted privilege given to a person by a group of followers. According to this definition, we can see that leadership is about the followers who choose to put their trust in a certain person to take on the challenge of making major decisions for them and being at the forefront speaking on their behalf. People tend to look for leaders who have certain qualities and who are capable of doing certain things. They research the candidates in an election, for example, looking for particular qualities, attributes and characteristics and not just vote for anybody that looks the best or wears the best clothes.

Is he/she well-spoken? Does he/she express themselves well? Are they greedy? What is their agenda? Do they have a history of good behavior or bad behavior? These and many more questions run through the minds of people when they are choosing a leader. This is mainly because whatever happens after that, whatever this chosen person does after he/she is chosen, now determines their lives.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #96**

**Great leadership requires dedication in the face of expectations  
and challenges and a commitment to face them head-on.**

It would be terrible to choose someone who is shy or not well-spoken or reluctant to take risks and they make decisions or say things that put the whole group in a quandary. We are all capable of being leaders. We all have a gift or quality that places us above other people in certain places or areas and we can all take an adventure in discovering these gifts and standing up to lead others in those areas. However, leadership does not require you to be better or have more skill than everyone else. You do not have to be the best writer to lead a writer's group. It is more about passion. Passion to lead, coupled with the ability to develop ideas and generate respect, humility and oneness among the group is a sign of great leadership.

### **The Challenges of Leadership**

The role of leadership comes with many challenges, as it is a role that requires one to lead different people, with different ideas, different passions and different desires. Great leadership requires dedication in the face of expectations and challenges and a commitment to face them head-on. People are not easy to manage, and it is even more of a challenge when they feel like they have to adhere to certain rules or face the consequences of someone else's decisions.

Here are a few challenges that leaders face...

**Inspiring Others.** It is often a huge challenge to inspire and motivate people and make sure that they are satisfied with their jobs and are working better and smarter. People work for different reasons. Some will have a passion for the job, some will just be there to pass time and to avoid being idle, some will do it just for the money, which sometimes makes it a challenge to be motivated and driven to do more work or do the work more efficiently. It is sometimes difficult to motivate these varying personalities to work as a team, excel and meet goals to advance the whole and not just do it because they have to do it.

**Leading a Team.** Once you attain a position of leadership, you no longer make decisions for yourself only. The team relies on you and your ability to make the best choices for the group. This can cause a lot of tension and cause some people in the group to stand in opposition to your decisions and can even make it a challenge to properly enforce some decisions and achieve your goals. Teamwork is the name of the game, and the enforcement of such can create tensions among the team, including team development, team management and team building. Sometimes it hinders or delays new ideas from being implemented. Individuals within a team have different needs, and motivating them to be better than average can be a stumbling block in the forward progression of a company, organization or ministry.

**Emotional intelligence and management.** Emotional intelligence basically means to be self-aware and have social regulation, having knowledge of your strengths and weaknesses. A leader, must be able to manage his/her emotions. Leaders are often challenged and criticized when they try to make certain changes. When the leader's decisions yield success, the people celebrate with them, but when their decisions lead to negative consequences, some people on the team will take a backseat and blame the leader. But leaders cannot allow their emotions to get the best of them. They have to be able to hear the opinions of others, but not let it interfere with their responsibilities.

**Maintaining focus.** A leader oftentimes has many demands for their attention and, as a result, their actions can easily be dictated by others. The ability to focus on what is most important at the time, is critical. Knowing your purpose and allowing your actions to stay in line with your purpose, helps in staying focused.

**Creating a shared purpose.** Younger members on the team have different passions, are very energetic. They often desire to make some drastic changes in life or fulfill some big dreams. They are very motivated to do certain things that may or may not be in line with the goals that have been set by their leader. They often want to create and provide ideas, which sometimes might lead to a conflict. It is challenging when they have specific ideas and cannot bring those ideas to life because they have to focus on some specific goals first. It is sometimes challenging to get them to focus solely on the vision. It takes a great leader to see their needs, understand their desires and still find ways to motivate them to focus and to keep the vision of the team before them.

### **The Spirit of Leadership**

In Dr. Myles Munroe's book entitled, *The Spirit of Leadership*, he explains that leadership is a spirit that is born inside every one of us. According to Dr. Munroe, "trapped within every follower is a hidden leader." Everyone has the ability to be a leader. Everyone deserves to contribute. Everyone must play a role in the recreation, reformation and further building of our environment and nation in whatever group we may find ourselves, at any given point in time.

The world needs true leaders, leaders in various sectors of government, schools, businesses, churches, youth communities, organizations, and in every area of life, something that is sorely missing in the world today. The spirit of leadership is sorely absent in our society today. There is lack of morals, discipline, passion and motivation. No amount of training, education,

conferences, or seminars can make a true leader. It comes from within. Desire, passion, drive and motivation are born from the inside out.

### **PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE #97**

**You can lead right where you are.**

Leaders are people who have experienced an inward transformation and a complete change of mind. They look at the world differently. They are positive in difficult situations and strive to achieve their goals regardless of the challenges they face. We all have a natural inclination to move from the mindset of a follower to the mindset of a leader. Society will flourish if everyone began to think like a leader, to form effective partnerships with others, offer services to others, teach others when they don't know, suggest better ways for things to be done and help fill in the gap where there is a void.

Leadership is not just for a few people with wealth, skill, connections or influence. The spirit of leadership dwells in us. We need only to look inward, unlock it and begin to act upon it. We are all capable of exhibiting leadership. Leadership is a trusted privilege. You can earn the trust of others when you naturally exhibit these qualities. It is not about being in a position of authority. You can lead right where you are.

#### **Attitudes and Attributes of a True Leader**

**A true leader is positive.** The leader of any organization, business, church, nation or group is required to have a positive attitude. When people in the group lack faith and are afraid to take risks, or they are afraid of the consequences of their actions, they will say negative things out of fear. This may be discouraging to a leader, but a leader must have a positive mind. When the winds are blowing and it seems like the storm will consume everyone and everything, a leader is supposed to be able to walk in and calm the storm.

**Purpose.** A good leader must have a purpose-driven agenda. There is no way you can find an exit in absolute darkness, and oftentimes, you wander aimlessly, in no particular direction. A purpose-driven leader is the one who creates and discusses the vision and the mission of an organization at the early stage, sets it straight, seals it and begins on the mission to bring the vision to life. Purpose is important in every section. It answers the question, why? Why are you taking that action and making that decision? It questions your every move and keeps you accountable. People who fail in their endeavors, oftentimes quit because of a lack of purpose, a lack of reason. It turns them into puppets, drives them into the whirlwind, and causes them to dance in whatever direction the wind blow.

**Humility.** Humility must be found in every good leader. Contrary to popular belief, leaders are most powerful when they are humble. A leader that is humble is willing to take the risk of trusting others with their vision. The idea that seems very big in their heads and the perfection they may require to bring it to pass, will have to be met with their willingness to allow others to manage it. It takes great level of humility and trust. Humble leaders are aware that their visions and dreams are huge and will outlive them. They do not try to take the credit for everybody's work or try to prove that they can do better than everyone else. They do not try to grandstand because they are at the top. They are willing to invest in others to become mature leaders as well.

**Love.** Finally, you can't lead people without loving them, or actually you can, but you can't lead properly without love, the kind of love that is patient and always kind (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). One that isn't greedy and thinking of himself/herself alone, but one that thinks of others higher than they think of themselves.

### **Co-Leadership**

Co-leadership is a type of partnership, which in a very simple definition means, to lead together. Co-leaderships exists in many different corporate organizations and in some



government bodies around the world. It is a concept that agrees to the philosophy that "two heads are better than one." It equally divides responsibilities, decision making, and every leadership privilege among two different parties to manage. It magnifies the idea of assistance and help. Two people can sit and discuss issues and ideas, brainstorm, weigh options and make decisions together, better than one person.

Operating a business or organization of any size using the co-leadership model is a very big advantage to the business or organization. Each leader assumes leadership responsibilities of the organization. It opens a wider window for opportunities, as the two leaders may be from different backgrounds. For instance, a company may be run by one person in leadership who is an accountant, but it provides more opportunities for business when this accountant partners with someone who is an architect or engineer.

In life, we need to understand the importance of co-leading, the importance of working with other people to jointly achieve a certain goal or bring a certain vision to life. We need to understand the need for joint efforts, as it will be very important at certain points in our lives. Partnership, assistance, team players are all necessary for success. Co-leadership, co-management, co-creation and all other concepts of joint efforts is an amazing way to get everybody involved and achieve greater results, more ideas, more support, more contributions, basically everything that leadership produces multiplied by two. One plus one equals success!